

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



Nov. 14, 2013
Vol. 178, No. 45

Reporting. Connecting. Inspiring.

Toll free 1-800-803-5201
www.thealabamabaptist.org

INSIDE



Adger's Dogwood Grove Baptist building lost in fire

◆ Page 4



Faith and Family: Depression, anxiety affects many; Christian counseling can help

◆ Pages 5-7



IMB training program prepares missionaries for ministry in rough, rural areas

◆ Pages 14-16

Jerry Shumake, owner of Shumake Furniture in Decatur and a member of First Baptist Church, Decatur, hosted a Matthew party Nov. 4 at the furniture store after-hours. He is pictured here with his granddaughter, Zoe Shumake.

Nearly 1,000 churches in Alabama host 'My Hope' events

By Carrie Brown McWhorter
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Throughout Alabama and the United States beginning Nov. 7, thousands of people once again heard the familiar voice of evangelist Billy Graham sharing the gospel. Ministry leaders in Alabama are optimistic that many hearts and lives were changed as a result of the effort.

My Hope with Billy Graham, a project of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, began in El Salvador in November 2002. Since then, nationwide efforts in more than 57 countries, including Russia, India, Brazil and Portugal, have spread the gospel to millions around the world.

Graham's 95th birthday

In 2013, in conjunction with Graham's 95th birthday, the campaign came to the United States. Months of planning culminated with a national airing of "The Cross" on Nov. 7. The video, billed as Graham's last sermon, is available on DVD and on-line at myhopewithbillygraham.org. Two additional English language videos, "Defining Moments" and "Lose to Gain," as well as a Spanish language video "Momentos Decisivo," are available for download at the website as well.

Each video combines contemporary music, art and powerful testimonies with footage of Graham's past messages. "The Cross" also features recent words from the aged evangelist, sharing the message of hope in Christ one final time with viewers. Though reports were incomplete at press time, ministry



Photo by Jeronimo Nisa/Decatur Daily

MY HOPE AMERICA

WITH BILLY GRAHAM

leaders and lay people around the state reported they were encouraged by the response to the effort so far.

"I was amazed to see how many people were talking about the video on Facebook after it aired (Thursday) night on the Fox News Channel," said Gwen Norris, a member of First Baptist Church, Frisco City, in Bethlehem Baptist Association. Norris also attended a Matthew party at Pastor Mark McCullough's home. Prior to the event, she and others had reached out to friends and community

members, inviting them to a time of fellowship followed by a message from Graham.

"The message of the Cross, of the impact of the Cross, that was really powerful," Norris said.

Serving as Matthews

It was a message that resonated with many throughout the state.

In Sardis Baptist Association, a handful of churches participated in the effort, and several individuals served as Matthews, inviting friends and neighbors into their homes to view Graham's message,

according to James Preachers, director of missions for the association. Preachers, who also serves as pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Coffee Springs, hosted a Matthew house party.

"Everyone who saw it was intrigued with the video," Preachers said. "One person rededicated his life to Christ, and others were moved."

The flexibility of the video format allowed churches to plan evangelistic events in a variety of settings, according to Don Hagel, (See 'Powerfully,' page 3)

Coming next week

Alabama Baptist State Convention
annual meeting coverage



COMMENT

Should Churches Give Through the Cooperative Program?

In my early days as a Baptist pastor few people, if any, ever challenged the assumption that a cooperating Baptist church supported the Cooperative Program (CP). In the church of my youth the congregation voted to give 20 percent of undesignated receipts to missions through the CP. The church I served as youth pastor marked CP as a preferred item meaning missions gifts were paid first along with the water bill and the electric bill.

At Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., I learned that a cooperating church gave at least 10 percent of its receipts to missions beyond itself through the CP. Funds for local missions were supposed to be an entirely different budget item.

Southern Baptists even promoted standards for every Sunday School and every church. One of the marks for a church was giving at least 10 percent to missions through the CP. In the first church I served as pastor I led the church to increase its CP giving to the recommended 10 percent level.

Cooperative nature

Most of the promotion of CP was because of the cooperative nature of Baptists. Churches joined together to take the gospel message to more places and in different ways than any single church could do by itself. Promotion also stressed the balanced nature of the CP. It was a partnership of the church, the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to do a variety of programs across local communities, across the nation and around the world.

Professors also offered a theological underpinning for churches tithing (channeling at least 10 percent) of their undesignated receipts through the CP. In Numbers 18:21, the Levites are given all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the Tent of Meeting (later the Temple).

In the same chapter (vv. 25–29) the Levites are instructed that they must give a tenth of all they receive as “the Lord’s offering” and this tenth is to be given to the Aaronic priesthood for their support.

Evidently this principle applied to all three tithes observant Jews were instructed to provide. The first tithe, often called the Lord’s tithe, was ordered in Leviticus 27:30–33. The



THOUGHTS
By Bob Terry

festival tithe, a second tithe, is outlined in Deuteronomy 14:22–26. The charity tithe, collected once every three years, was commanded in Deuteronomy 14:28–29.

The Levites provided the point of collection for the tithes, the explanation went. But all who labored for the Lord, whether priest or Levite, were entitled to garner support from the tithes of the people. The principle for Levites giving beyond themselves was the tithe, the same guideline given the people. Similarly local churches provide the collection points for tithes and offerings but all who work in the ministries and missions done by cooperating Baptists are entitled to garner support from the tithes and offerings of the people.

No one claimed this was an exact model because of its obvious limitations. Churches are not Levites and those involved in state- and SBC-sponsored ministries and missions are not Aaronic priests. Still the Scripture passages were pointed to as providing guidance about why churches should channel at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts to missions through the CP.

‘Golden calf’

It wasn’t long into my ministry before the assumption about CP giving began to be challenged. Critics called CP a “golden calf” and accused leading pastors of buying seats at the leadership table by their CP giving.

Instead of CP giving, denominational identity shifted to certain theological positions, evangelism activities or support of particular causes.

SBC and some state conventions elected various leaders who openly rejected the idea that churches should give at least 10 percent of undesignated receipts to missions causes through the CP. Eventually Southern Baptists adopted a new term — Kingdom Giving — that included giving to all missions causes and not just missions giving through the CP.

The result was predictable. CP giving declined drastically. Today the average Baptist church barely gives one-half the average of the 1980s. According to the 2012 SBC Annual, in the 1980s, the average percentage of undesignated receipts given by SBC churches through the CP was 10.50 percent. In the 1990s, the average percentage was 8.73 percent. In the 2000s, the average dropped to 6.80 percent. For the last five years, the average percentage of undesignated receipts given by churches to missions causes through CP is 5.78 percent and for the last year of record, 2010–2011, the average percentage was 5.41 percent.

Today national and state leaders promote CP giving with enthusiasm similar to that of leaders in the 1960s and 70s. Bravely they try to stop CP’s downward slide but there is little

evidence of success. Instead it is not uncommon to hear pastors talk about abandoning the idea of cooperative missions embodied in the CP. In its place, some advocate funding only those efforts that directly benefit their particular church and its missions

efforts. For some that might be an international project; for others, a North American missions undertaking; for still others it might be paying to provide seminary training for its ministers and members. This is how Baptists operated before 1925 when Baptists first adopted the CP.

God-given blessing

Undoubtedly the Great Recession of recent years contributed to the downward trend in CP giving but the sad state of the economy is not the cause of the downward slide. The recession simply magnified the pressures already on what former generations of Baptists called a God-given blessing for missions and ministries.

So the debate goes on. For those who see the CP as a “golden calf” before which Baptist worship, CP giving will continue to fall and churches of that persuasion will boldly say that cooperating Baptist churches do not have to/should not give to missions through CP.

But there is another analogy for the CP, which reflects the beliefs of this writer. That analogy was offered in a recent associational meeting when the speaker described the CP as a “sacred donkey on which Southern Baptists have ridden taking the gospel to lost people around the world.”

If one views the CP in that way, then one will join me in giving a resounding “Yes” to the questions about whether or not churches should give to missions through the CP.



Follow Bob Terry
Twitter
@drbobterry





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

(ISSN 0738-7741;
USPS 011-080)

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

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

**DIGITAL
SUBSCRIPTION RATES**
Church Budget — \$8.50
Individual — \$14.95

DR. BOBBY S. TERRY
EDITOR

Jennifer Davis Rash
Executive Editor

Grace Thornton
Assistant Editor

Neisha Fuson
Editorial Assistant
for Online Communications

Julie Payne
News Writer

Lauren C. Grim
Designer

Wanda Bergeron
Local Editions

Linda Harrison
Financial Administrator

Bill Gilmore
Advertising Director

Debbie Campbell
Director of Circulation
and Public Relations

NEWS SERVICES
Baptist Press (BP), Associated
Baptist Press (ABP), Religion
News Service (RNS), Forum 18
(F18), Morning Star News (MS).

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

ADDRESS CHANGE
Send old and new addresses,
and name of church to:
Circulation Department
3310 Independence Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209
Allow two weeks.

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

**Full member of
Alabama Press Association**

**'Nation's Top Regional
Christian Newspaper'**

1999, 2004, 2007, 2008,
2009, 2010, 2011, 2012
as judged by Associated
Church Press, Evangelical
Press Association or Religious
Communicators Council



Photo courtesy of Bill Barnett

More than 50 youth watched 'Defining Moments' at Union Hill Baptist Church, Oneonta, Nov. 6. The video, part of the 'My Hope with Billy Graham' initiative, addresses youth suicide, drugs and skepticism. Seven youth made decisions for Christ at the Friendship Baptist Association church's event.

'Powerfully moved'

Billy Graham project reaches thousands nationwide

(continued from page 1)

Sunday School director at Locust Fork Baptist Church, in Friendship Baptist Association. Hagel hosted a birthday party in honor of Graham at a local nursing home and shared the plan of salvation with residents after showing the video.

Beulah Baptist Church, Muscadine, in Cleburne Baptist Association, promoted the church's regular Wednesday night services as "dinner and a movie" and encouraged mem-

bers to bring unchurched friends to see the video.

At Union Hill Baptist, Oneonta, also in Friendship Baptist Association, Pastor Bill Barnett said more than 50 youth watched "Defining Moments," which addresses youth suicide, drugs and skepticism at a student event on Wednesday night that resulted in seven decisions. One of the youth members at the church also used his birthday party as a Matthew party and shared the video with his friends there.

Donnell Brown, director of missions for Morgan Baptist Association, hosted a Matthew party in a predominantly unchurched neighborhood. Though no first-time commit-

ments were made, Brown said there was a "tremendous Spirit" in the small group and that the individuals watching were "powerfully moved."

Since there were opportunities to see the video in both small group settings and at home on television, he expects to see many personal decisions for Christ, both in his association and around the state.

"I expect that a lot of people made decisions (after viewing the video) and that many of them will be in church for the first time in a long time on Sunday morning," Brown said. "The response in our churches likely will be the best gauge of how effective the effort was."



Photo by Carrie Brown McWhorter

Thirteen groups from Beulah Baptist Church, Muscadine, met in homes to participate in 'My Hope' and share the gospel.

**"I expect that a lot of people made
decisions (after viewing the video) and that
many of them will be in church for the first
time in a long time on Sunday morning."**

Donnell Brown
director of missions, Morgan Baptist Association



Photo courtesy of Darrell Cook

A fire burns the building of Dogwood Grove Baptist Church, Adger, in Mud Creek Baptist Association on Nov. 7. The cause of the fire had not been determined at press time.

The Church will prevail

Dogwood Grove's building suffers total loss from fire

By Neisha Fuson
The Alabama Baptist

What we're seeing is the Christian community reaching out to a church that has just lost its building," said Darrell Cook, pastor of Dogwood Grove Baptist Church, Adger.

The Mud Creek Baptist Association church nearly burned to the ground during the early morning hours of Nov. 7 and at press time the cause had not yet been determined. Although the Adger Fire Department was fighting to stop the fire, the morning light made it clear that the building was a total loss.

Cook, who has served as pastor for more than three years, said Dogwood Grove Baptist is a significant part of the community because it is the only church in the area.

'Baptists are loving on us'

Church members and leaders met at the church site throughout the day Nov. 7, praying together and remembering events and ministries that took place in the church building, which was built in 1919.

"Baptists are loving on us," Cook said. Several churches offered their meeting spaces for Dogwood Grove to use, he said, and a church in Pleasant

Grove offered, and later delivered to Cook, hymnals for Dogwood Grove to use Nov. 10. Cook said church leaders would meet Nov. 9 to discuss future plans and finalize where the church will meet temporarily.

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief officials also contacted Cook and were prompt to offer help, Cook said, including how and when to send a mobile unit for the church to use.

Praying for continued ministry

Ken Maddox, director of missions for Mud Creek Association, said he is praying the church will see this as "an opportunity for them to reach out and look forward to the next 100 years of ministry" in the community.

"God can take from the ashes and build up an even greater opportunity for ministry than we could have ever imagined before," he said.

And Cook hoped that the morning service Nov. 10 would be "meaningful," where church members could grieve together but also think about rebuilding together.

"God is good to us and it's His Church," Cook said, noting that the Sunday sermon would focus on the truth that the Word of God is constant, the Church will prevail and "the things we can touch are not the things that are permanent." ❧

*"God can take from the ashes and build up
an even greater opportunity for ministry
than we could have ever imagined before."*

Ken Maddox
director of missions, Mud Creek Baptist Association

Alabama updates

People, churches making news across the state

Birmingham Association's King celebrates 25 years

"Great strides have been made in racial reconciliation and working between churches," John E. King Jr. said. "We're seeing God move in a mighty way."

King, who celebrated his 25th anniversary at Birmingham Baptist Association (BBA) on Oct. 17, said it has been a "tremendous opportunity" to work with churches through times of major demographic shifts. When he began his work at the association, only one African-American church was a member. Today there are more than 30.

King, who currently serves as the association's associate executive director for church and community relations, spends the majority of his time serving and "resourcing" churches. He teaches people how to grow closer to the Lord, first of all, he said, and helps pastors and church staff to understand the importance of self-care and family. He takes special care when teaching the importance of family. After the loss of his son, Jonathan, in a car accident 11 years ago, King said he has a "new perspective" on life.

King also has served as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, Birmingham, for the past 10 years and previously served as pastor of Galilee Baptist Church, Birmingham. He was a member of Trinity Baptist when he felt called into ministry May 21, 1977, and later served as the church's associate pastor.

King has a bachelor's degree from Virginia Union University in Richmond, Va., attended New Orleans Baptist Seminary and has a Juris Doctor degree from Birmingham School of Law.

He and his wife, Elaine, have been married for 39 years and have two children and two grandchildren. (Neisha Fuson)



KING

BHS President, CEO Shane Spees resigns

Shane Spees, president and chief executive officer of Baptist Health System (BHS), has resigned to become president and chief executive officer of North Mississippi Health Services in Tupelo.

The board of directors made the announcement Nov. 6.

"While we are disappointed to see Shane leave, North Mississippi represents a unique professional opportunity for Shane," said John Holcomb, chairman of the BHS board of trustees. "Additionally, and probably most importantly, Shane and his wife, Parker, were raised in Tupelo and their parents still reside there. Shane will be able to continue his growth as a health-care leader while returning home and being closer to family."

"Shane has performed superbly since joining Baptist Health System of Alabama in 2007 as our chief executive officer," Holcomb said. "Baptist is definitely a stronger organization thanks to Shane's leadership. One of the most important legacies Shane will leave behind is the strategic direction and strong management team he has built."

Spees will remain at the helm through mid-December, ensuring a smooth transition of leadership. (BHS)

FBC Pelham's Pastor Shaw to retire in 2014

After 35 years of serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, Pelham, Mike Shaw plans to retire May 31, 2014.

Shaw's first pastorate started in July 1971 at Carrollton Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, La. He served as pastor of Munford Baptist Church (1973-1976) and of Millry Baptist Church (1976-1979) before he was called to serve as pastor of First, Pelham, on May 15, 1979.

Besides serving as a pastor, Shaw has served as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention for two terms (2010-2012), on the board of directors for *The Alabama Baptist* for two terms (1987-1995) and as *The Alabama Baptist's* chairman of the board (1993-1995).

Shaw and his wife, Mary, have two children and three grandchildren. They plan to stay in the area and remain members of First, Pelham. (Neisha Fuson)



SHAW

CAN ANYONE HELP?

I have been struggling with feelings of worthlessness and guilt for the past several weeks. I have a hard time concentrating at work and at home. I am constantly irritated with my family. I think I may be depressed, but I am afraid to tell anyone because I've heard people at church say that Christians should never be depressed. I have prayed so hard, asking God time and time again to take this depression from me and make me feel normal again, but I still feel so overwhelmed by life. Some days, I don't even want to get out of bed. I feel like something must be wrong with me or wrong with my relationship with God. I think I need to see a professional, but will anyone really be able to help me?



istockphoto.com

Dealing with depression

Christian counseling proves to be successful for those dealing with anxiety, depression

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

Amy Jones first experienced symptoms of depression during her first year of college. “I moved away from home and into a dorm room with someone I had never met,” she said. “Suddenly I was dealing with new people and new situations every day, and I was anxious all the time.”

At first, Jones assumed she was homesick and thought the anxiety would pass once she adapted to the pace of college life. However, the feelings not only persisted, they worsened as the semester continued.

“During those months, it was all I could do to drag myself out of bed to go to class,” she said. “I could hardly concentrate on the professor’s words or the material, and as soon as class was over, I would go back to my room and back to bed.”

At one point, Jones was sleeping 14–16 hours each day — definitely not a typical college student’s schedule. She lost weight and her academic work suffered. The high school honors student was struggling in her classes, which magnified her feelings of worthlessness.

“I began to think about having a car ‘accident,’ thinking that if I got hurt, I would have an excuse to just lie around and feel sorry for myself,” she said. Once she even considered ending her life. Not once did she consider counseling.

“I was young and emotionally immature, and I thought I should be able to handle everything on my own,” she said. “The thought of admitting my weaknesses to anyone seemed just one more failure to me.”

Years later, Jones is not sure what brought her out of her depression. The semester break helped, she thinks, as did making some friends in the dorm. She passed all of her classes, which may have helped too.

Situational depression

“I realize now that my problem was situational depression. Starting college was a major transition, but once I adjusted to campus life I began to feel better,” she said.

Jones experienced many other life transitions in the years that followed. She finished college, got a job, married and became a mom. She remembers experiencing some emotional lows during those years, but nothing that lasted for more than a few weeks. That changed in 2006.

“At first, I just had a sense of impending doom that wouldn’t go away,” she said. “I lay awake at night, worried that I might die or that my parents might die. I prayed, asking God to take the fear away, but I couldn’t find any peace.”

Whereas before, Jones had sought escape by sleeping, now sleep was elusive. Night after night, she lay awake crying as her husband and children slept. During the day, (See ‘Focus,’ page 6)

What can a counselor do?

Research cited by the National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) suggests that delayed treatment for depression can lead to greater impairment in the future, so it is important for an individual experiencing symptoms of depression to be evaluated and treated early.

If the person is unable or unwilling to take action, friends and relatives can help the depressed individual identify a qualified professional, make an appointment and/or travel to appointments. Many health care plans offer services to identify mental health experts in a geographic area, as does the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, according to WebMD. Pastors and physicians may be good sources of information as well. Credentials are important in the mental health field, so look for a licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, social workers, psychiatric nurse or counselor.

Since each individual is different, the plan of treatment will depend on the needs of the patient, (See ‘Counselors,’ page 6)

Counselor's perspective

'Depression does not change your status as a child of God' Pathways counselor says

By **Mandi Kessler**
Pathways Professional Counseling
www.pathwaysprofessional.org

If God loved me, I would not be depressed. I am depressed, so God must not love me."

This is the kind of circular thinking that has disheartened many believers who seek counseling. However, it is simply not true. Instead it is the type of negative self-talk that leads people down a path toward isolation and deeper depression.

Many great Christian writers, theologians and biblical figures struggled with feelings of depression. Charles Spurgeon wrote and spoke often of his depression. The great hymn writer William Cowper was often in despair. He even had to seek mental health treatment, and it was there that he heard the gospel. Martin Luther's experience of frustration, which led to him throwing his ink well at the devil, is legendary. In the Bible, we read of Job, who sat in sackcloth and ashes in grief over his situation. Several of the Old Testament prophets lamented that God should let them die.

Depression can have many causes. For example, it is normal to experience depression after the death of a loved one or as the result of a relationship conflict. Survivors of physical, sexual or emotional abuse often face depression later in life. Sometimes, however, depression may be a side effect of a medication, including drugs used to treat common illnesses like high blood pressure. In some cases, genetics or hormonal changes can increase an individual's risk of depression.

Just as the causes vary, the symptoms of depression also can vary greatly from individual to individual and from culture to culture. The spectrum of symptoms may be confusing to the person experiencing them.

Focus on positives instead of negatives

(continued from page 5)

she had trouble concentrating on her work, and in the evenings, she was irritable and withdrawn.

"I just wanted to be alone. I felt drained, lifeless, like what I needed to do required more energy than I could muster," she said. "On some level, I knew my thinking was wrong, but I felt powerless to think logically and overcome the negative thoughts that constantly filled my head."

The final straw was Mother's Day, when the pastor's sermon on the Proverbs 31 woman left her feeling so overwhelmed with guilt that she cried all the way home from church. Jones' husband insisted that waiting this out was no longer an option, and he encouraged her to make an appointment with a Christian therapist who uses cognitive behavioral therapy to help adults dealing with depression.

"During our first meeting, I sat on the couch and cried," Jones said. "I was so embarrassed, and I felt so weak. But I went back the next week."

As part of her treatment plan, the counselor suggested a brief reading list, including Scripture and research-based self-help books. He also recommended that Jones speak with her physician about short-term medication therapy. During the months

that followed, the counselor helped Jones recognize both her depression triggers and issues in her life that needed to be handled differently. They discussed strategies for coping with stressful situations, including the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise, and Jones learned the importance of positive self-talk to counter negative thoughts.

'Positive outlook on life'

"Not only did I feel better after a few weeks of therapy, but I felt healthier — emotionally, physically and spiritually," Jones said. "I had a more positive outlook on life than I had had in a long time."

In the years since her treatment ended, Jones has experienced emotional lows, just like everyone else, she said. The difference is that when feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness begin to emerge, she counters them by re-evaluating the situation and looking for the positives instead of focusing on the negatives.

"I still tend to be a glass-half-empty person, but counseling helped me realize that there is still something valuable in the glass."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Name changed for privacy reasons. ☞

In one person, depression may be marked by frequent crying spells, but in another, it might be expressed as angry outbursts towards one's self or others. Symptoms may include physical complaints such as body aches, lethargy or insomnia. Difficulty concentrating is another common feature.

The truth is that depression affects many different people from many different walks of life, and in every person, it takes a different form. It may be chronic and constant, a short-term response triggered by a traumatic event, or something in between. Similarly people experience different symptoms and

different self-talk associated with their depression.

No matter what depression looks like for you, it is very real and is not something to take lightly. Depression has real causes, and there are many helpful treatments available. Those treatments include research-based behavioral strategies that help change destructive patterns of thinking. While these basic changes in behaviors may look like a simple cure for sadness to some, they are not "pulling yourself up by your bootstraps" approaches. Behavioral therapy, sometimes in combination with other forms of therapy, including medication, can be very effective in helping an individual cope with depression.

Recovering from depression can seem like an insurmountable mountain to the person who is suffering, but those individuals should be encouraged that there are many options for treatment.

Do not hesitate to see your physician in order to address any physical ailments that may be causing your symptoms. Doctors are able to help with physical causes for depression, and professional counselors are able to help with spiritual and emotional causes.

Whether you or a loved one are affected by depression, it is important to remember that God created us as unified beings, so depression may affect our body as well as our spirit. As mentioned above, depression often tricks us into believing lies about ourselves and others. It is helpful to have someone who can speak truth into our despair. A counselor can see where our thinking has gone askew and may help facilitate the development of healthier ways of thinking and acting.

Most importantly, do not isolate yourself or feel that you are not a "good enough Christian." Depression does not change your status as a child of God, but it may be used by God as a refining fire to conform you more closely into the image of His Son. ☞

Counselors take variety of approaches

(continued from page 5)

which is important, according to Ian Jones, professor of psychology and counseling and Baptist community ministries' chair of pastoral counseling at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

"There is the danger of using a structured approach to try to help everyone in the same way, but depending on where a person is, a different engagement is necessary," Jones said.

Initially a therapist will evaluate the patient and determine a course of treatment. Once the evaluation is complete, a therapist might take several approaches, including:

► Cognitive-behavioral therapy, a type of talk therapy that helps people with depression restructure negative thought patterns and evaluate interactions with the environment and other people in a positive and realistic way.

► Interpersonal therapy, another type of talk therapy that helps people understand and work through troubled relationships that may cause depression or make it worse.

► Medication therapy, the use of antidepressants and/or anti-anxiety

medications which regulate chemicals in the brain that play a role in depression. Medication therapy combined with talk therapy can be very effective in treating major depression and reducing the chances of relapse.

Journaling ... might reveal patterns that need to be changed or addressed.

► Journaling, which challenges the patient to track mood changes, symptoms, sleep, exercise, diet and other daily activities that might reveal patterns that need to be changed or addressed in counseling sessions. (Carrie Brown McWhorter)



Easter
IS COMING!

Join the 2014
Easter Cross Witness®

Celebrating our
10th year

Call and ask about our early
bird church order special.

EasterCross.org • 214-450-5010

Bible vital resource for life's challenges

By Joel L. and Kaye Farrow
Special to The Alabama Baptist

Many Christians have experienced depression and the guilt that often comes with the belief that they should not have been depressed in the first place. Where do we get this belief?

We are hard-wired to feel and to think, since both are necessary to be in relationship with God, self and others. Depression is a physiological brain state involving chemicals that are intricately connected to the thinking and feeling process. When we shame ourselves for feeling and thinking what we are designed to feel and think, we put up a wall that separates us from God, others and even our inner self. Shame can turn a healthy and appropriate emotional response into a downward spiral of emotions.

Fortunately we are not alone in this struggle. Consider the journey of some of the heroes of the Bible:

► Abram became depressed when God did not walk with him through the sacrificial ceremony when he expected God to do so (Gen. 15).

► Jonah became depressed when God did not agree with him that the Ninevites had mistreated him and should be destroyed (Jonah 4).

► Job became depressed when God allowed all that he had to be taken from him (Job 4).

► David became depressed when King Saul wanted to kill him (Ps. 42).

► Peter became depressed as he dealt with the guilt of denying Christ (Luke 22:62).

Emotional responses

Disappointment, frustration, hurt and fear are all appropriate emotional responses to many of life's challenges. Instead of telling ourselves that we are wrong for having these thoughts, we can model our response after those in the Bible who faced the same feelings:

► Abram listened to God and received the covenant promise of land for his descendants.

► Jonah faced his fear and saw the power of God.

► Job cried out to God and was restored.

► David obeyed through the struggle and was given the kingdom.

► Peter allowed Jesus to restore him and became the missionary to the Gentiles.

Depression affects body, mind and spirit. Appropriate responses include addressing each of these areas.

Scripture teaches us that there is healing for our body, renewing for our mind and freedom for our spirit. When we address our thoughts and feelings, we must do so with compassion toward ourselves and an openness to hear from God. We should remember Proverbs 2:6: "All wisdom comes from the Lord, and so do common sense and understanding."

We will have many emotional responses in our lifetime, and many will have the potential to lead to depression. Be encouraged to respond to yourself with compassion and to use all of the wise resources that God has provided.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Joel Farrow is pastor of First Baptist Church, Chalkville, in Birmingham Baptist Association. Kaye Farrow is a marriage and family therapist. ☞

10 tips for managing depression

1 Get out. Depression isolates, so it is helpful to get out of the house, even when you do not feel like it or have any desire to do so.

3 Get some sleep. Keep a healthy sleep schedule with a consistent bedtime and wake time.

Depression can trigger insomnia or lethargy, but what your body needs is not always what it wants. Depression also can be a symptom of sleep apnea. See your doctor.

5 See your physician. Depression can be a side effect of medication or a sign of a treatable condition.

7 Seek the truth. Do not believe the lies in your head. If you cannot speak truth to yourself, find a friend who can and will. Until then, remind yourself that you cannot read people's minds and that the worst-case scenario is the least probable outcome in a situation.

9 Start a conversation. Research has shown that talk therapy and medication are both effective, but you may get the best results from using both. Talk with your doctor or therapist about what is right for you.

2 "Fake it until you make it." Get up in the morning and get dressed as though you are going out, even if you do not make it out the door.

4 Eat. Consume regular, healthy meals whether you feel like it or not.

6 Pursue God. Maintain the God-ordained methods of receiving grace, including church attendance, prayer and Bible study.

8 Get moving. Exercise is one of the fastest ways to interrupt the stress hormones that flow through our bodies.

10 Know when to ask for help. This may not be something you can handle on your own. Seek wise counsel and talk to your family and friends about how you are feeling.

Source: Mandi Kessler

Biblical encouragement for those with depression

Deuteronomy 31:8 — The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged

Psalms 34:18 — The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Psalms 3:3 — But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 — Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can

comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

Jeremiah 29:11-12 — "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you."

Philippians 4:13 — I can do all this through (Christ) who gives me strength.

(Source: Carrie Brown McWhorter; all Scripture from the New International Version)



The State Board of Missions joins with the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in encouraging churches to give 1% more through the Cooperative Program.

If each Alabama Baptist church increased Cooperative Program gifts by 1/4% of undesignated receipts per year, we will meet the 1% Challenge in only four years. This is also a good way for a church to begin giving through the Cooperative Program.

During the 1% Challenge, we have seen a number of encouraging testimonies. In fact, during the first seven months of this year, 935 churches have increased their Cooperative Program giving over the same period in 2012.

Together we can do more to impact the Kingdom.

For information and resources about the Cooperative Program, please contact State Missionary Jim Swedenburg, 1-800-264-1225, ext. 283, jswedenburg@alsbom.org.



Church ANNIVERSARIES

Toney's Concord Baptist celebrates centennial

Concord Baptist Church, Toney, celebrated its centennial Sept. 15 during a 10 a.m. worship service.

The service began with a reading of minutes from the church's first business meeting. The minutes were read by a grandson of one of the charter members. A congregational singing followed with "How Firm a Foundation," the first song the Limestone Baptist Association church sang after it was initially organized, according to anniversary committee chairperson Retha Dorning.

Three former pastors — James Junior, Paul Clutts and John Bain — were recognized and spoke to the congregation. Tim Anderson, another former pastor of the church, delivered the sermon.

Robert Fullerton, director of missions for Limestone Baptist Association, and Nancy Beasley, representative from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, both presented the church with plaques.

The service also featured an interpretive dance as well as recognition of charter members. Lunch followed in the fellowship hall, and Dorning noted that church member Debbie Hardaway baked a cake resembling the first church building.

"We just enjoyed the day, seeing people we hadn't seen in a long time," Dorning said, adding each family who attended received a copy of the church's history as well as a CD with church photos. More than 200 people were in attendance for the celebration, she said.

"There was a real exciting spirit about the day. It turned out to be a real special day for the church," noted Pastor Lynn Marshall.

He added his vision for the future of Concord Baptist is "to see the church grow spiritually as well as numerically." (Julie Payne)

Gadsden's North Highland celebrates 75 years

North Highland Baptist Church, Gadsden, celebrated its 75th anniversary Sept. 22 during the morning service.

The service featured former pastors of the Etowah Baptist Association church, including Steve Trader, who delivered the sermon.

The Heirborn Quartet from Georgia sang in the service and also later in the afternoon. "The music was just above awesome and so was the sermon," said Pastor Michael Anderson.

Gary Cardwell, director of missions for Etowah Association, presented a plaque to the church to commemorate its 75 years and Wendell Dutton, representative from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, also presented a plaque. Receiving the plaques on behalf of North Highland Baptist were the church's four oldest members.

"We had a good crowd," Anderson said, noting former members were there to celebrate with the church. "We just had a wonderful time." He added his vision for the future of North Highland is for growth. (Julie Payne)

Tuscaloosa's Mount Paran marks 125 years

Mount Paran Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, celebrated its 125th anniversary Sept. 29 during an 11 a.m. worship service that began after Sunday School.

A former pastor of the church, Robert Shirley, spoke briefly about Mount Paran Baptist and his time spent there in ministry.

Interim pastor David Watson delivered the sermon, and a plaque from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission was presented to the Tuscaloosa Baptist Association church by Jim Ryan, chairman of deacons.

A fellowship meal followed the service, Ryan said. He noted the most memorable part of the day was "seeing people that had been members — maybe even when they were young — come back to celebrate with us." (Julie Payne)

Online education

Despite 'huge' hesitancy, seminaries branch out in online degrees

Theological education has increasingly left brick-and-mortar schools and headed back to congregations and family homes as more seminarians study online.

"The old move — uproot your family, get a new job, move to the seminary — that model isn't working for so many people today," said Ronald Hawkins, vice provost at Liberty University, which has around 9,000 students in its online seminary.

"They are looking for a way to increase their biblical theological knowledge, to expand their ministry skills and to remain within the context of the ministry setting."

Despite "huge" hesitancy to allow online theological degrees, online education is growing, said Daniel Aleshire, executive director of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), the main accrediting body for more than 270 seminaries and graduate schools.

Until 2012, ATS did not allow any degrees to be offered fully online. Now ATS allows master of arts programs to be earned fully online; in February 2013, ATS created a process for master of divinity programs to waive residency requirements.

So far, six schools — Anderson University School of Theology, Chicago Theological Seminary, Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Pentecostal Theological Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary — have been granted exceptions to residency requirements for either the master of arts or master of divinity degree.

Today, 103 ATS member schools (38 percent) offer at least six courses online.

"The schools have been learning more effective ways to provide online courses," Aleshire said. "The door has been opened for schools that have particular expertise, particular information and a particular constituency that would benefit from this form of information."

Still, there's some fear that students unsuited to ministry — whether by lacking interpersonal skills or moral character — could walk away with an online degree, Aleshire said.

"The sense is that theological

education is not just the transfer of certain types of information; it's about the transformation of individuals who then have the intellectual and spiritual maturity to serve as leaders," Aleshire said.

But seminaries are realizing that offering online degrees can allow older students to stay in established communities.

The average online student at Liberty University is 35 and married with children, Hawkins said. Moving to a traditional seminary means uprooting the family and, particularly for older students, leaving their church community.

John Aukerman, director of distance learning at Anderson University, said that although he believes studying in a traditional model is best, the online model is sometimes the only option for many students.

'Uneasy compromise'

The Church of God, the denomination Anderson University is affiliated with, does not require a seminary degree for ordination, Aukerman said. Thus, many of the roughly 2,300 Church of God pastors lack graduate degrees and wish to improve their theological education without leaving their congregation.

"It's kind of an uneasy compromise," Aukerman said. "I want to offer what's best, but if they can't take what's best, let's offer them something that's good anyway."

But for Daryl Eldridge, president of Rockbridge Seminary,

an online-only school with about 200 students, the online versus traditional seminary debate is not a matter of which is "best," but which suits the individual student. When a student already has a ministry, online education is the best option, Eldridge said.

"It brings theological education back to the church, where I think it belongs, so students are learning ministry by being engaged in ministry," Eldridge said.

At Liberty, online students watch videos of professors' lectures and interact with each other through online forums. Professors are available by email or phone and must respond within 24 hours.

Sometimes the virtual interaction between students and professors may be greater than in a traditional environment, Hawkins said. In addition to receiving feedback from a credentialed professor, students often receive additional responses from pastors, elders and other members of their ministry.

Aleshire said online programs at ATS member schools also must have some "patterns of face to face interaction."

"There's real formational power in a community of students with teachers living and working together, and online students aren't going to have that kind of experience," Aleshire said. "There's also real formational power in working with persons in a congregation and being engaged and embedded in a congregation." (RNS)

"Students are learning ministry by being engaged in ministry."

**Daryl Eldridge
president, Rockbridge
Seminary**



is preparing ministers.

Do you know a high school senior who is interested in ministry?

Go to www.samford.edu/preminscholars to learn about this unique opportunity and scholarships up to \$15,000.

Samford University is an Equal Opportunity Educational Institution/Employer.

Follow us on
Twitter
@AlabamaBaptist





3 Things Christians Should Know About Foster Care

Jessica Morales, Communications Associate
Nicole Walker, Communications Associate
Kim McGainey, Southeast Area Director

Louise Green, Vice President of Special Programs
Cathy McDaniel, Social Worker
Elise Vincent, Social Worker

Many people have heard the term foster care, but for many of you who partner with Alabama Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCH) you may not know the full extent of your investment in our foster care ministry. A few of our social workers want to share the impact you are making when you partner with us with the top three things every Christian should know about foster care:

Foster Care is a calling. Foster Care is a calling. When families say yes to the calling of foster care ministry, they are opening up their lives to provide a safe home environment for these children. Many children coming through our care have never been to church, so many of these children are encountering Christ's love for the first time in their lives through our foster families. Because our families are in the frontlines of our foster care ministry, we are dedicated to walking with them through this journey. We equip our foster parents with 30 hours of in-depth training before becoming foster parents, as well as 50 hours of training per year during their time as foster parents. Our social workers are with our families every step of the way, attending court hearings and catering every need of our foster families. What is also unique about our ministry is that we provide counseling opportunities for foster parents and children through our Pathways Professional Counseling services, with counselors who have specialized training in attachment and play therapies.

Foster care is not always glamorous. In recent years God has awakened the church to care for orphans and foster children, yet it can be presented in such a way as to make it sound glamorous and attractive. Who would not want to be a part of rescuing a child, sometimes literally saving a child's life? However, as Dr. Moore states in *Adopted for Life* the "protection of children is not charity, it is spiritual warfare." This journey for many foster families is not an easy one. Not all children easily embrace foster parents - in fact they may desire the parents who were not providing for their needs at the time. Many children have been through difficult situations that many of us cannot even imagine. When God calls one of His believers to step into the life of an orphan or foster child, He is calling the believer to not only save the orphan but to be willing to step into the suffering of that child and suffer alongside that child. The orphan's story becomes our story, and their suffering becomes our suffering.

Foster Care is an organized vessel for Christians to carry out God's calling to care for the orphan. God created ABCH as a tool for the church to fulfill the calling in James 1:27 - "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." We strive to equip churches to support foster families in their congregations, providing relevant counseling resources and tools to walk in this journey with these families. Ultimately, though, these children don't need ABCH or the foster families - they need Jesus who shines and works through us to meet their needs. Whether through partnering with us, praying for our ministry, or living out the calling to be foster parents, all of these facets lead to the end goal of Christ being glorified.

To learn more about how you can partner with us in foster care ministry, please contact office at 888-720-8805 or visit us online at alabamachild.org.

2013 CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AROUND ALABAMA

- The **ABCH Dothan Campus** will host their annual Christmas Open House on Friday, December 6, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- The **ABCH Decatur Campus** will host their annual Christmas Open House on Sunday, December 8, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- The **ABCH Mobile Campus** will host their annual Christmas Open House on Sunday, December 8, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- The **ABCH Oxford Campus** will host their annual Christmas Open House on Sunday, December 8, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Make sure that you check out the full list of events at www.alabamachild.org.



Alabama Baptist
CHILDREN'S HOMES
& Family Ministries

P.O. Box 361767
Birmingham, AL 35236-1767

Telephone: (205) 982-1112
Toll Free: (888) 720-8805



On Facebook? Find us there at:
[Facebook.com/AlabamaChild](https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaChild)
[Facebook.com/PathwaysProfessionalCounseling](https://www.facebook.com/PathwaysProfessionalCounseling)



Are you on Twitter? Follow us at:
[Twitter.com/AlabamaChildOrg](https://twitter.com/AlabamaChildOrg)
[Twitter.com/PathwaysCounsel](https://twitter.com/PathwaysCounsel)

www.alabamachild.org
www.pathwaysprofessional.com

ALABAMA EVANGELISTS

Evangelist James Messer

JAMES E. MESSER MINISTRIES

James Messer will celebrate 50 years of ministry in September 2014. He has preached in over 1,000 revivals and crusades. He also has served as pastor for 20 years and has a heart for pastors as well as the local church. James is a member FBC Tillman's Corner where Greg Pouncey is pastor. He is available for:

- Revivals • Senior Adult Meetings • Harvest Days
- Crusades • Bible Conferences • Other special events

P.O. Box 1325 • Theodore, AL 36590 • 251-653-6652
251-605-8491 (cell) • jemrebs@aol.com • jamesmesser.com



"Bo is effective with children, students and adults. God has given him the gift to 'draw the net.' Your people will be encouraged to give their life to Christ!"

— Brad Harris, senior pastor,
FBC Clay City, Ill.

"Bo Shedd led our church in a 4-day crusade, and we experienced a mighty awakening of the Holy Spirit — many precious souls came to faith in Jesus Christ!"

— Max Briley, senior pastor,
North Tenth Street Baptist Church,
Blytheville, Ark.

BO SHEDD
MINISTRIES

P.O. Box 2685, Cullman, AL 35056
256.347.3166 • 256.590.1830
shedd.melinda@gmail.com
www.boshedministries.com
Facebook — Bo Shedd

Evangelist
Leon
Westerhouse
Birmingham, AL

- Music Evangelism
- Harvester Preaching
- Drama Evangelism
- Revivals / Crusades

Vocational Evangelist
Since 1964

Inducted
into the
Evangelists
Hall of Faith
2008



205-854-3839

Email: LPWester@aol.com

www.leonwesterhouse.com

Revival • Conference • Concert
Vocal • Choral • Worship



Bob Smith Ministries, Inc.
P.O. Box 14101 • Huntsville, AL • 35815
256-797-6011
www.bobsmithmusic.org

Bob Smith is an extremely gifted singer and will be a blessing to the churches that invite him. I call upon my friends to use this man. He is morally clean, has a sweet and supportive wife, and will conduct himself in a Christian way. A lot of people can sing — but not everyone can sing and minister. Bob can do both and that's why I am happy to commend him to you.

Evangelist Junior Hill

MUSIC EVANGELIST • WORSHIP LEADER
SINGER • SONGWRITER

David Todd
MINISTRIES

dsactodd@bellsouth.net

3148 Jim Busby Road • Theodore, AL 36582
251-973-0032 (home) • 251-599-4764 (cell)



Evangelist Daniel J. Bayse, EdS

Licensed Professional Counselor, Supervising Counselor

Trussville, AL (205) 661-0104

djbayse@prodigy.net

Available for Revivals, Seminars, Pulpit Supply

For Couples: The Joys of Marital Love: A Christian View of Sex
For Youth: How to Handle Forbidden Fruit (Tobacco, Alcohol, Drugs, & Sex)
How to be Happy in an Unhappy World; God's Definition of Love
Prison Ministry training, and other messages/seminars to meet your needs

'Every box is a missions trip'

FBC Rutledge aims for nearly 1-to-4 ratio of attendance, Christmas shoe boxes

By Anna Keller
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

When Fran Christian retired and moved back to her childhood hometown of Rutledge, she didn't even know what Operation Christmas Child (OCC) was. But seven years ago, when she found out her church — First Baptist Church, Rutledge — was looking for a new OCC director, she went ahead and volunteered to help address the need.

"I went online and found out about the program," Christian said. "Then, after the first year, I was able to visit the distribution center in Atlanta, and everything totally changed. It just fired me up."

And it's truly been remarkable how much Christian and members of the Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association church have been able to accomplish during the past few years.

First, Rutledge, is one of hundreds of Alabama Baptist churches that participate in OCC.

OCC is a missions outreach fueled by Samaritan's Purse, a



Photo courtesy of Fran Christian

Christian humanitarian organization that targets people in need as part of their outreach. OCC donors pack shoe boxes with everything from school supplies to toiletries to small toy items and send them to Samaritan's Purse to be distributed across the globe as needed.

Though Christian's church averages about 30 in attendance each Sunday, they've donated 100 OCC boxes each year for the past five years. And in 2013, Christian said, they're aiming for 115.

"I've told (fellow church members), 'We think that Rutledge, Alabama, is so small and we can't do anything, and what I want to get through to y'all is to know that we all can be missionaries,'" she said. "Every box that you help fill is a [missions] trip to whatever child receives it."

Christian keeps a close eye on sales in the area and passes along those updates to church members. She even has the information added to the church bulletin and starts making announcements about OCC as early as August each year.

She gathers all the items and, once they have enough to pack at least 50 boxes, hosts a "packing party" in the fellowship hall. Anyone who's interested can come and help load the boxes with goodies and prepare them to be shipped to recipients. In addition to the gift items, each box contains a letter from the church letting the child who receives the box know that a group of people in Alabama loves them and that God loves them too.

Ruth Morgan, a member of First, Rutledge, has been donating to OCC for as long as the church has participated in the program, and said she feels proud to be able to help children who don't have access to as much as Americans do.

"We saw photos showing the kids smiling when they got things in the shoebox," Morgan said. "That made me feel really good that I can ... be a part of this."

Morgan has even enlisted the help of her daughter, who lives in Florida, and now donates to the church's annual OCC drive.

For more information on OCC, visit www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/.

KNOW
WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF
SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

A concussion is an injury caused by a blow to the head in which the brain moves rapidly and may collide with the inside of the skull.

Even a minor fall or collision may be of concern, so be alert to symptoms such as headaches, unsteadiness, confusion or other types of abnormal behavior.

Any athlete with a suspected concussion:

- Should be **IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM PLAY/ACTIVITY**
- Should be urgently assessed medically
- Should not be left alone
- Should not drive a motor vehicle

CONCUSSION CLINIC
205.934.1041
www.ChildrensAL.org/concussion

Children's of Alabama®

IN CASE OF MEDICAL EMERGENCY, CALL 911 OR GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR LOCAL ER

Healed by the Hands of God

As a ministry of healing, Shelby Baptist treats body, mind and spirit

Most people who have experienced a state of chronic pain will tell you, it's hard to embrace "trust" and "faith" when it comes to healing. More likely, those suffering spend a lot of time praying for relief.

Phoebe Donald Robinson understands living with pain, and an unfortunate series of ongoing health problems keep her in constant pain. Although she has plenty of reason to complain, Phoebe decided she's better off managing what she can and putting her trust in skilled physicians and the hands of God. But to understand how Phoebe is able to remain faithful in the face of so many set backs, you have to hear her story.

Phoebe's story

All her life, Phoebe was plagued with what her family called the "Donald stoop" — a trait possessed by many of her previous family members that caused them to stand with a hunched back. It was not until her thirties that Phoebe discovered the "stoop" was more than an inherited abnormality. She had inherited a rare genetic condition (HLA B27) from her father, cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Charles J. Donald, Jr., resulting in the diagnosis Ankylosing Spondylitis (AS) causing



Phoebe Donald Robinson

Photo by Robert Farley

her neck and spine to become fused. The condition worsened over the years, and Phoebe learned to live with the discomfort and inconvenience of not being able to stand up straight or completely turn her neck. But as she learned to manage her AS, other unrelated health problems began to arise.

Phoebe rolled with the ups and downs of her ailments — the frequent doctor visits, the barrage of medications, the constant pain — but when she began experiencing abdominal pain, she quickly sought the expertise of

gastroenterologist Dr. Robert Marks at Shelby Baptist Medical Center. After an MRI, Phoebe was shocked to discover that her renal aneurysm (balloon) on the main artery to her right kidney that had been stable since 2009 was much larger. Dr. Marks wasted no time personally assembling a top-notch team of physicians at Shelby Baptist for Phoebe's care.

She continued with cardiologist, Dr. Neeraj Mehta, who reviewed her MRI films and told Phoebe, "If you get a call from a surgeon, don't be alarmed." Sure enough, the call came quickly from vascular surgeon, Dr. Steve Taylor. "I met with Dr. Taylor," Phoebe said, "He told me he had only seen two of this type of aneurysm in his career. Of course, the only reaction I could feel was — well — alarmed."

Dr. Taylor initially attempted to repair the aneurysm through an arteriogram procedure, but during the procedure it was evident that a more aggressive open surgical approach was the only option. Dr. Taylor performed the delicate operation. But to complicate the situation even further, because of Phoebe's AS, the anesthetic would be extremely difficult to administer.

"In the pre-op appointment, I talked to anesthesiologist, Dr. Mary Gutzke, for more than hour. She took all this time with me and I could tell she felt like it was so important to know everything," Phoebe recalled. "I just felt like everyone at Shelby was taking extra steps to care for me, I don't think I've ever had anyone be that caring."

The morning of the surgery, Phoebe was anxious, but felt confident that her team of doctors was fully prepared. "That morning, I had a lot of people praying for me, and I just felt comforted."

"Dr. Mehta had told me that he would agree with me in prayer that the aneurysm be fixed in the safest way possible for me and I knew that was the open surgery. I knew Dr. Taylor had changed the path of his life because of the call of God and was led to Shelby. I felt that God was leading me to this huge surgery every step of the way."

The five-hour surgery was a success. Phoebe recovered, even overcoming some setbacks. Throughout her stay at Shelby Baptist, she continued to feel the care and compassion of her physicians and hospital staff members.

"I just can't say enough," she said. "The physical therapists were amazing. The nursing staff was just unbelievable — so good. And my amazing team of doctors continued to pray for me, called to check on me and kept everything moving. Dr. Michael Lathem, who administered my anesthesia, came to see me at 9:30 at night, just to check on me. That's the kind of caring I'm talking about."

Phoebe credits her faith and her family for helping her overcome her fair share of challenges throughout her life. And in this situation at Shelby Baptist, the evidence is clear that "God was there every step of the way."

baptisthealth system
Answering the call.

Citizens | Shelby | Princeton | Walker
Baptist Medical Centers



facebook.com/
BaptistHealthFoundation

1-877-222-7847
Visit us online at www.bhsala.com



youtube.com/
BaptistHealthSystem



HAVE YOU EVER
ASKED YOUR
MEDICARE PLAN

**“WHAT’S IN IT
FOR *Me*?”**



**\$5 PCP
copay**

**No medical
or drug
deductibles**

**\$0 per
month plan
premiums**

**\$0 copay
for Tier 1
generic
drugs**

baptisthealth

VIVA MEDICARE *Me*
(HMO)

1-888-830-VIVA (8482) or TTY: 711 SEVEN DAYS A WEEK, 8 A.M. - 8 P.M.

VIVA MEDICARE an HMO plan with a Medicare contract and contract with the Alabama Medicaid Agency. Enrollment in VIVA MEDICARE depends on contract renewal. Other providers are available in the VIVA MEDICARE network. You must continue to pay your part B premium. \$0 copay applies only to prescriptions filled at a preferred pharmacy. Please see your pharmacy directory for a complete list of preferred pharmacies. The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information, contact the plan. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, premium, and/or copayments may change on January 1 of each year.

H0154_mcdoc1302A CMS Accepted 10/07/2013

www.VivaMedicareMe.com

You might not
EXPECT
to find Santa Claus this far south.
Wise men come here too.





You might expect a college town to be pretty quiet during the holidays, but you won't find more opportunities to celebrate anywhere than the Auburn-Opelika area. Get in the spirit with our Victorian Front Porch Christmas, the Loveliest Village Tour of Homes, the magical musical light display at National Village, and more. We can also tell you how to find the best places to shop and eat while you find the true meaning of the season and a whole lot of other cool things you might not expect.

Auburn Opelika
TOURISM
aotourism.com | 334.887.8747

susan
ashton

lenny
leblanc

billy
dean

richie
mcdonald



Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.
Davis Theatre in Montgomery, Alabama
Tickets 334-241-9567

CROSS CANYON TRAIL

RIDIN' STRONG WITH JESUS



"IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF, AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, AND FOLLOW ME."
LUKE 9:23

Bogard Press

Always true to the Word

800-264-2482 ext 5112
903-793-5112 www.vbs.bogardpress.org

Grab your cowboy hat, dust off your boots, hop on your horse and gallop on over to Cross Canyon Trail where we will be Ridin' Strong with Jesus. As we blaze a trail on the cattle drive, we will make some life changing discoveries about following Jesus. While Ridin' Strong with Jesus we will learn we need to be:

- RIDIN' READY as Gideon
- RIDIN' OBEDIENT as Ruth
- RIDIN' FAITHFUL like Nehemiah
- RIDIN' BOLD as Peter
- RIDIN' COURAGEOUS as Esther




Being prepared

Alabama missionary helps train others for life, outreach in jungles

Eighteen Southern Baptist missionaries and their kids watched with mixed emotions as the twin-prop plane took off from the jungle airstrip, headed back to the city.

As they stood surrounded by wide rivers and miles of dense Amazon rain forest on all sides, reality began to sink in. They were on their own.

The group trudged through mud and stifling heat, loaded down with children, suitcases and boxes of supplies, before arriving at the

camp — a row of simple wooden cabins beside a river — that would be home for the next month.

The missionaries — some new, some veterans but all supported by Southern Baptists' Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Cooperative Program — were the first group to arrive at the new International Mission Board (IMB) jungle training center. This training program is designed to help missionaries learn to live and work in tough rural places.

Donny Barger, an IMB missionary and trainer from Alabama who helped start the camp, said the



LAKE FOREST RANCH

SUMMER CAMPS 2014



- Faith-Building Summer Camp Sessions located in a towering pine forest next to a beautiful 60-acre lake in east central Mississippi.
- Grace-Filled Spiritual Mentoring of Campers ... one-on-one ministry is what we do
- Worship, Joy, Fun, Love, Laughter, Life ... In Jesus!

For camp schedules, general information and to learn how to make group reservations, call 662-726-5052 or go to WWW.LAKEFORESTRANCH.COM

LFR is an interdenominational evangelical co-ed ministry providing summer camp for church groups (and many are Baptist like you) for children (ages 7-12), preteens (ages 9-12), Students (ages 11-18), and Student Missionaries (ages 14-21).



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR ETERNAL IMPACT

TOTALLY HIS

HEART, HANDS, VOICE

2013 **LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING®**
WEEK OF PRAYER FOR INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS DECEMBER 1-8

National goal: \$175 million
Alabama's goal: \$11.6 million

program will better prepare missionaries going to work among the nearly 230 unengaged, unreached people groups living in isolated places throughout the Americas. That's 230 people groups that are less than 2 percent evangelical Christian and who have no one seeking to reach them with the gospel.

A learning process

"One of the things we hear most often from missionaries after ... their first term is, 'I really wish someone would have helped me understand what it was really going to be like going into an indigenous area,'" Barger said. "And sometimes [lack of preparation] causes you to make big mistakes with your people group that takes you a long time to get out of."

As the older kids set off to explore their new surroundings, the confused adults began learning how to set up a home in the jungle, asking basic questions such as "Where will we sleep?" "Is the river safe to swim in?" "What is for dinner?"

One trainee, Lisa Williams, had an even more pressing concern as she gazed warily at the river flowing directly beside her cabin. With four children between the ages of 1 and 6, such proximity to fast-moving water made her uneasy.

"I didn't come in with a lot of expectations, because I didn't know what to expect," she said. "I didn't know what our housing would be. I just had to be flexible and lower my expectations."

Barger said going in unprepared was a planned part of the experi-



IMB photo

After flying to the Amazon jungle, eight missionary families lug their baggage through a village and down a long path from the airstrip to a new IMB jungle training camp. There they will spend the next month developing skills to live in rough, isolated places.

ence. "If you tell them everything, it really isn't as good a learning experience," he explained. "Sometimes it's good to not have all the answers and to think through how you're going to respond. It's good to let people discover that on their own."

For the next month, trainees lived in a closely packed com-

munity with few modern luxuries. There was no Internet or phone access. Generator-powered electricity was available only for a couple hours — most evenings. Food selection was limited to a hodge-podge of nonrefrigerated goods from a small local store, accessible only by canoe every few days. Indoor running water

was precious, and the nearby river served as the community bathtub, washing machine, food disposal and transportation route.

Despite the challenges, trainers emphasized that the goal was to teach, not torture.

For more than a decade, IMB missionary Jake Johnson has lived (See 'Walking,' page 16)

Stop by
our booth!

Estate Stewardship Ministry

The Baptist Foundation of Alabama and our strategic partner PhilanthroCorp, a Christian Estate planning firm in Colorado Springs, CO, can assist churches in creating and implementing a viable estate stewardship ministry with minimal staff time required. The result will be twofold:

1. Church members will be *served* by providing access to professional estate planning at no cost to the member.
2. The church and other ministries will receive estate gifts to fuel ministries.

Stop by our booth at The Alabama Baptist State Convention and allow a member of our staff discuss with you how the implementation process works. We can explain the different support services provided by The Foundation and PhilanthroCorp to help make your Estate Stewardship Ministry a success!



Barry Bledsoe
President



Bill McCrary
Vice President for
Church Relations



J. Rodney Bledsoe, J.D.
Chief Development Officer



Joseph N. Hocutt, II, J.D.
Development Officer



The Baptist Foundation of Alabama
P.O. Box 241227 | Montgomery, AL 36124
(334) 394-2000 | www.tbfa.org | tbfa@tbfa.org

BIG JAR GIVING



**91% of a
person's ability
to give is not from
cash or income.**

With help from a few members of a local tribe, students at IMB's jungle training camp pile into a canoe to head upriver. Spending time with locals helps missionaries learn survival skills while building relationships for sharing the gospel.

Walking in the Spirit

Trainees' daily schedule includes personal devotion, reflection, prayer

(continued from page 15)
in the Amazonian community where the camp was built. He and his wife, Tanya, now use their expertise in jungle living to teach other missionaries how to thrive in difficult places.

"This is to help you and your family figure out what needs you're going to have to live comfortably in a remote setting," Johnson told the trainees when they arrived. "It's about figuring out what you're going to do in this situation."

The trainees soon learned how to collect rainwater in barrels and pump it into their homes. They — and their children — quickly discovered how to avoid the huge thorn trees that lurked beneath the muddy river water.

Meat was scarce and a friendly competition soon arose over who could catch the biggest piranha

or wolf fish for dinner. Killing scorpions and tarantulas became routine, and it was understood that privacy and silence didn't exist during waking hours.

Preparing for obstacles

While braving the environment, the missionaries attended sessions on sharing the gospel with indigenous peoples. They also studied some of the most common obstacles missionaries face in rural cultures steeped in animism and witchcraft.

The group practiced learning difficult, nonwritten languages and learned to tell simple Bible stories to those who can't read.

Each day's schedule also included times for personal devotion, reflection and prayer.

"We're spending a lot of time focusing on personal devotions," Barger said. "While we have peo-

ple in a close community with no electricity, no Internet or phone, no television or anything, we're able to disconnect them and give them some solitude."

Over the course of four weeks, the trainees fell into a practiced, though not necessarily comfortable, jungle routine. While the first day saw a group of nervous newbies, the group that sat by the airstrip a month later, joking about their unforgettable experience as they waited for their ride home, was dramatically different.

They were ready to be Christ's heart, hands and voice among unreached peoples.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Some names have been changed for security reasons. (IMB)



IMB photo

in Loving Memory

of Alabama Baptist leaders, friends

Todd Reaves

Former Alabama pastor Reaves dies at 50

Todd Reaves, a former Alabama Baptist pastor, died Nov. 3. He was 50.

Reaves graduated from Alexandria High School, Jacksonville State University and Andersonville Baptist Seminary (now Andersonville Theological Seminary) in Camilla, Ga.

He was a pastor for more than 23 years and his ministry service included serving as pastor of the former Calvary Chapel Baptist Church, Ohatchee; Mignon Baptist Church, Sylacauga, in Coosa River Baptist Association; and Heritage Baptist Church, Pell City, in St. Clair Baptist Association. He also did evangelism in both Alabama and Georgia.

Reaves was employed by Childersburg High School where he served as an assistant coach for the softball team.

He is survived by his wife, Lisa, and one son.

(TAB)



REAVES

Alabama lowers preterm birth rate

Alabama lowered its preterm birth rate but not enough to change its grade. It again earned an F on the 2013 March of Dimes (MOD) Pre-mature Birth Report Card.

The 2012 preterm birth rate was 14.6 percent, down from 14.9 percent in 2011. The national trend has been improving over the past six years.

"Partnerships with our state health officials and local hospitals have helped us make newborn health a priority ... making a difference in babies' lives," said MOD's Lisa Carter. "We will continue to work to give all babies a healthy start in life because too many are born too soon, before (some) ... organs are fully developed." (MOD)



Photo courtesy of Bower Memorial Baptist Church

BOWER MEMORIAL HONORS CHURCH CLERK

Bower Memorial Baptist Church, Evergreen, in Conecuh Baptist Association honors Eva McCutcheon on Oct. 27 for 38 years of service as church clerk. Pastor Jim Griffin presented McCutcheon with a plaque. She has been a member of the church for 53 years and has served the church in the choir, in the nursery, in Vacation Bible School and is currently teaching a senior adults Sunday School class. McCutcheon and her husband, Billy, have one son and two grandchildren.

susan
ashtonbilly
deanlenny
leblancrichie
mcdonald

Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.
The Davis Theatre in Montgomery, Alabama
Tickets 334-241-9567

SPECIAL THANKS TO





Gender-based abortions spark outrage in UK

CANTERBURY, England — A group of Christian lawyers plans to sue two medical doctors who have raised a storm of controversy for arranging the abortion of female fetuses because the parents wanted boys. Andrea Williams, CEO of the London-based Christian Concern, said her group would file suit against the doctors since the government declined to charge them.

In an Oct. 7 letter to the attorney general, Director of Public Prosecutions Keir Starmer said the Abortion Act of 1967 “does not expressly prohibit gender specific abortions.” Starmer said the only basis for a prosecution would be that the doctors failed to carry out “a sufficiently robust assessment” of their patient’s health. Disclosures that women were being granted abortions based on the sex of their fetuses followed an undercover investigation by the *Daily Telegraph* in February 2012. The media group secretly filmed doctors agreeing to terminate fetuses for sex selection purposes.

Visit our booth at the Alabama Baptist State Convention



TRAINING LEADERS
IMPACTING COMMUNITIES

Do you want to ...

Make a difference in your community ...

Increase your ministry effectiveness ...

Learn more about the Bible ...

If so, Heritage Bible College is for you.

Bachelor of Arts in Religion • Master of Arts in Religion

Master of Arts in Religion includes emphases
in Bible, Ministry or Youth & Children's Ministry



HERITAGE BIBLE COLLEGE

6806 Whitesburg Dr. SE • Huntsville, AL 35802
256-704-5678, ext. 355 • HeritageBibleHSV.org

Tax-exempt status

Churches endorsing political candidates sparks debate

Congress established the 501(c)3 tax-exempt status applicable to churches, religious organizations and ministers “in recognition of their unique status in American society,” the International Revenue Service (IRS) claims in its Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations.

The designation benefits those that qualify in a number of ways. Public charities are exempt from paying federal corporate income tax and often from state and local corporate income taxes. That means houses of worship and church-related organizations save money. For churches, perhaps the most important benefit is the ability to solicit charitable donations — including offerings — that are tax deductible for the donor.

Political prohibitions

The IRS provision sets five primary requirements in place that entities must meet to qualify for the designation. Two of the five govern political activity: No “substantial” part of the organization’s activities may “involve attempts to influence legislation,” and the group cannot “intervene” in political campaigns.

The code says organizations that qualify as not-for-profits under

501(c)3 “are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office.” The code further prohibits any “public statements of position.”

The IRS interprets that portion of the code to mean speech could be restricted, even if a candidate isn’t “expressly” named, if the information is sufficient for readers or listeners to be able to identify the candidate. A communication can be construed as a violation if it “expresses approval or disapproval of one or more candidates’ positions or actions.”

That point caught the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in the 2012 presidential election cycle. Although Graham did not endorse anyone for president, he met with then-Republican candidate Mitt Romney. Media declared the evangelist “sort of” endorsed Romney through that meeting.

Later Graham authorized newspaper ads in which he urged people to vote for candidates who supported marriage as biblically defined, were pro-life and would defend religious freedom.

While he did not explicitly endorse Romney or any Republican candidates nor openly oppose Democratic ones, the Freedom

from Religion Foundation sued the IRS for failure to investigate the political activities of churches and religious organizations, singling out Graham’s association.

The prohibition against political campaign intervention by tax-exempt nonprofits became part of the IRS tax code in 1954 when then-Texas Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson introduced it during a floor debate.

Good or bad?

Although some groups believe Johnson posited the tax code addition as a means to stop political challengers, no historical record of the senator’s reasoning exists.

Today a growing number of Christian legal activists, notably the Alliance Defending Freedom and the Liberty Council, are calling Johnson’s IRS amendment unconstitutional for four reasons.

First they believe the amendment violates the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause because it requires the government to “excessively and pervasively monitor” speech that takes place in religious contexts.

Second it violates the Free Speech Clause “because it requires the government to discriminate against speech based solely on the content of the speech.”

Third it further violates freedom of speech because a condition of receiving a tax exemption requires an organization to refrain from addressing certain topics.

Fourth the Johnson amendment violates the Free Exercise Clause because “it substantially burdens a church’s exercise of religion” but without a “compelling reason” to do so, the Alliance notes.

The Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty supports the IRS restrictions citing the need to keep the “wall of separation” in place between religion and the state.

Others supporting the IRS restrictions point out that “pulpit politicking threatens to divide congregations and communities and replace the theological mission of the church with one focused on partisanship and division.” (ABP)

MissionLab

www.missionlab.com

Spring Dates

March 9-15
March 16-22
March 23-29

Summer Dates

June 1-7	June 22-28	July 13-19
June 8-14	June 29-July 4	July 20-26
June 15-21	July 6-12	July 27-Aug 2

REGISTER TODAY

SUPERIOR
Church Furnishings

Steeple • Baptisries • Portable Baptisries
Stained Glass Windows • Cushions
Pews • Pew Refinishing & Upholstering

154 St. Clair Drive
St. Simons Island, GA 31522
1-800-975-2129
www.superiorchurch.com



Let Beltone buy you a Holiday Dinner!*

'Tis the season to hear your best. Simply purchase a Beltone hearing aid in December, and enjoy dinner on us.

\$800 off



a pair of Beltone Promise™ hearing instruments.

Beltone

Savings off MSRP. Cannot be combined with other offers. Not valid on previous purchases. \$400 off single instrument. Expires 11/29/13.

Look! She's wearing it!

Hearing loss can be extra-frustrating during holiday time. It's hard to hear in crowds and at family gatherings. You miss so much! This season, make an appointment for a free hearing screening.

If we diagnose a hearing loss and you say 'yes' to hearing help, we'll say thanks with a \$100 Visa® giftcard* to use at the restaurant of your choice!

Call today. Spaces are limited, so call now.

Warning Signs of Hearing Loss

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Do people seem to mumble more frequently? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 2. Do you experience ringing in your ears? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 3. Do you often ask people to repeat themselves? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 4. Does your family complain that you play the radio or TV too loudly? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 5. Can you no longer hear normal household sounds, such as the dripping of a faucet or the ringing of a doorbell? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 6. Do you have difficulty understanding conversation when in a large group or crowd? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 7. You hear, but do you have trouble understanding all the words in a conversation? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 8. Do you find telephone conversation increasingly difficult? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 9. Do you have trouble hearing when your back is turned to the speaker? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| 10. Have you ever been told you speak too loudly? | ☐ Yes ☐ No |

If you answered "yes" to at least two of these questions, you may have hearing loss and should have your hearing tested.

Beltone
Helping the world hear better

ATTENTION Receive 2 Hearing Aids With No Out Of Pocket Expenses

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, SPOUSES, DEPENDENTS & RETIREES

Beltone™ IS A PROVIDER FOR YOUR FEDERAL HEARING AID BENEFIT PLANS 104, 105, 111, 112

CALL YOUR NEAREST BELTONE LOCATION

Athens: 256-867-4200
Bay Minette: 251-295-9324
Bessemer: 205-277-6242
Cullman: 256-841-4514
Decatur: 256-286-0817
Dothan: 334-712-6778

Fairhope: 251-272-8997
Florence: 256-275-4226
Foley: 888-625-1316
Gardendale: 205-683-6100
Grove Hill: 251-275-4901

Huntsville: 256-722-5299
Jackson: 251-247-0071
Jasper: 205-282-4527
Mobile (Airport Blvd.): 251-342-7000
Mobile (Sage Ave.): 251-479-9409

Montgomery: 334-239-7877
Opelika: 334-749-1686
Pelham: 205-216-4025
Saraland: 251-679-0034
Scottsboro: 256-218-3186

Thomasville: 334-636-0000
Trussville: 205-383-2945
Tuscaloosa: 205-409-4683
Vestavia: 205-267-5032
Winfield: 205-487-4300

*Gift Card applicable with the purchase of a set of Promise, Change, or Origin Hearing aids. Benefits of hearing aids vary by type and degree of hearing loss, noise environment, accuracy of hearing evaluation and proper fit. Beltone Hearing Care Centers are independently owned and operated. Participation may vary. ©Beltone 2013.

LEEDS STAINED GLASS, INC.

SINCE 1995

Toll-free 888.699.9679

AL local: 205.699.9679

Call for **FREE** on-site consultation

Ask for Terry Barnes, Owner

information@LeedsStainedGlass.com

Visit www.LeadsStainedGlass.com
for online gallery!

Across ALABAMA'S Associations

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

► **Hilldale Church, Center Point**, will hold a southern gospel concert with Wilburn & Wilburn on Nov. 24, 2 p.m. The church also will hold "An Instrumental Christmas" on Dec. 8, 5:30 p.m. Enjoy hot chocolate and apple cider while instrumentalists play heartwarming carols and other popular Christmas songs. For information on either event call the church at 205-853-3000. Ron Pate is pastor. ► **The This & That Crafts Guild**, a missions group of **McElwain Church, Birmingham**, will hold a crafts fair Nov. 23, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. in the

church fellowship hall. There will be homemade crafts and food. R. Joby Triquet is pastor.

GENEVA

► **New Hinson Church, Slocomb**, will hold a Harvest Festival on Nov. 17, 3-5 p.m. with food, fun, games and entertainment. The church also will hold Harvest Day on Nov. 24, 10 a.m. Tony Barber will speak and Mercy Revealed will provide special music. There will be dinner on the grounds. Adam Hubbard is pastor.

MUD CREEK

► **Sparks Gap Church, Bessemer**, will hold an all-day Thanksgiving service Nov. 24 with an afternoon singing at 1:30 p.m. with The Singing Commodes. Johnny Thacker is pastor.

PLEASANT GROVE

► **East Brookwood Missionary Church, Brookwood**, will hold a benefit singing Nov. 23. For more information call 205-886-9591. Kevin Williams is pastor. ► **Friendship Church, Brookwood**, will hold a singing with The MissionHeirs on Nov. 17, 10:30 a.m. Keith Harris is pastor.

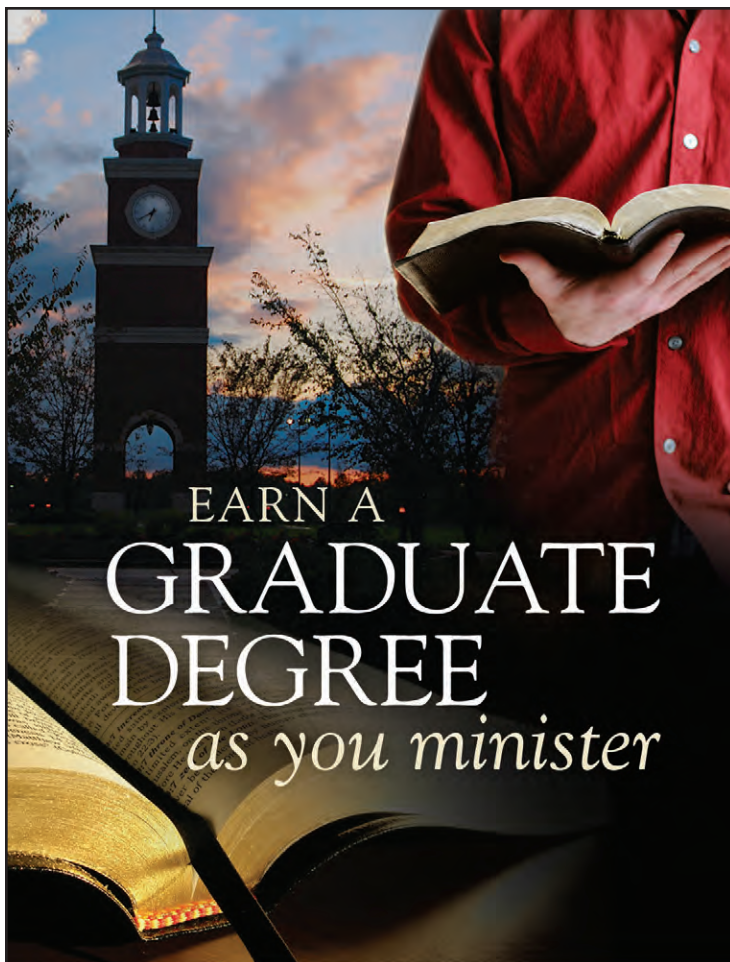
SHELBY

► **North Shelby Church, Birmingham**, will celebrate its 20th anniversary Nov. 24. Festivities will begin at 9 a.m. and the service will follow at 10:15 a.m. Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, will speak. Lunch will follow. Allan Murphy is pastor.

— Correction —

An announcement that ran under Across Alabama's Associations in the Oct. 31 issue noted Jeff Brown, pastor of Sardis Church, Mount Olive, had previously served as pastor of New River Church, St. Amant, La. His correct title at New River was youth pastor.

The Alabama Baptist will not publish Across Alabama's Associations in the Nov. 21 issue because of state convention coverage. Email news@thealabamabaptist.org to submit your church announcements for the Nov. 28 issue by Nov. 19.



EARN A
**GRADUATE
DEGREE**
as you minister

MASTER of CHRISTIAN STUDIES Online

Graduate Theological Education
for a Changing World

For missionaries, church planters
and bi-vocational pastors

DOCTOR of MINISTRY

Dedicated to Serious Scholarship and
Compelling Expository Preaching

Residence seminars at the Stephen Olford Center,
a beautiful, retreat-like setting in Memphis, Tenn.



uu.edu/graduate/theology

EXCELLENCE-DRIVEN | CHRIST-CENTERED | PEOPLE-FOCUSED | FUTURE-DIRECTED



Grow what matters.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 3:18

Learn how Asbury Seminary can help you grow what matters with a Masters of Divinity degree or a Masters in Counseling, Spiritual Formation, Christian Leadership, and more. Online learning options are also available.

Call. 800.2ASBURY | Click. asbury.to/grow | Visit. asbury.to/visit



C.S. Lewis remembered

Lewis to be honored on 50th anniversary of his death

By Joanne Sloan
Special to The Alabama Baptist

Live Staples “C.S.” Lewis died Nov. 22, 1963, the same day President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Lewis’ death was understandably not the big news event of that day.

On the 50th anniversary of his death, Lewis will have numerous accolades. He will be honored in Poets’ Corner, Westminster Abbey, joining those influential British writers who have been immortalized there throughout the centuries.

In his birthplace of Belfast, Northern Ireland, his death received little attention. In 2013 though, the inaugural C.S. Lewis Festival runs Nov. 18–23, with literary events of song, drama, performance, readings, talks and tours.

Born on Nov. 29, 1898, Lewis was known as “Jack” to his family and friends. After his mother’s death when he was 9, he moved to England to live with his brother, Warren.

While enrolled as a student at University College, Oxford, in 1917, he left to fight at the front in World War I. After recuperating from his wounds, he returned to Oxford and completed his degrees in 1923.

During his teenage years, Lewis abandoned

his childhood Christian faith and became an atheist. But after being influenced by the writings of George MacDonald and G.K. Chesterton and many discussions with fellow professor J.R.R. Tolkien, Lewis became a Christian on Sept. 22, 1931. He described his conversion in his book “Surprised by Joy”: “I was driven to Whipsnade Zoo one sunny morning. When we set out I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did.”



LEWIS

From 1924 until 1954, he was a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. There he and friend Tolkien took part in an informal literary club known as the Inklings. From 1954 until the summer of 1963 he was chair of medieval and renaissance literature at Cambridge University.

Lewis wrote more than 30 diverse books, including the popular fantasy Narnia books that have sold more than 100 million copies. His works continue to attract a vast audience each year.

In 2000, *Christianity Today* asked church leaders and contributors to nominate the 100 best writers of the 20th century. C.S. Lewis was overwhelmingly selected as the best author and his book, “Mere Christianity,” the top book.

The “love” of his life was Joy Davidman

New feature coming

The Alabama Baptist will launch a new monthly feature — *Heroes of the Faith* — in January. It will focus on famous historical Christians from previous centuries, such as the feature here on C.S. Lewis, and will be written by Joanne Sloan.

Sloan, a member of First Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, has been a published writer of articles and books for 30 years. She has a bachelor’s degree double majoring in history and English from East Texas State University (now Texas A&M–Commerce) and a master’s degree specializing in English from the University of Arkansas (1978). (TAB)



SLOAN

Gresham, whom he married in 1956. Although she had terminal cancer, they had several happy years until her death in 1960.

On July 15, 1963, Lewis was admitted to the hospital, where he suffered a heart attack and went into a coma the next day. He awoke and returned home, but his health continued to decline. In mid-November he was diagnosed with renal failure. He died one week before his 65th birthday. He is buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Headington, Oxford.

The acclaimed author wrote in “The Weight of Glory”: “The door on which we have been knocking all our lives will open at last.”

That door opened on that famous day in November 1963 for the great C.S. Lewis, and he entered glory. ☛

Want to know God?

Pastor Robert Mullins
Mount Hebron West Baptist Church, Elmore

Searching for “more to this life” seems to be a constant in secular culture. Life without Christ has proven to give emptiness. If you ever find you are longing for more and there seems to be a hole in your heart, then you may need a “heart transplant.”

You may need to swap your old, self-serving heart for a heart that is full of the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Through His death on the cross and resurrection, not only did He forgive our sins but He makes us new. We learn from the Gospel of John, “For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.” Jesus also said, “Behold, I make all things new.” So if you are in need of a heart transplant, Jesus Christ is the beginning and the end.

First you need to confess and believe that Jesus can give you new life. Paul told us in the Book of Romans, “That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Your confession means you understand that only Christ can forgive your sin. This confession begins with the prompting of the Holy Spirit as you are convicted there must be more to this life.

Second you must repent of your sin. When the Holy Spirit convicts, or reveals your sin, it is time for you to make a move — repentance. To repent you must turn away from your sin and selfishness and move toward God and His holiness.

Third you must understand you are justified only through Jesus and His grace. You will be able to live in right relationship with the Lord through justification. As you live in the grace of Christ, you will find God’s peace abounds.

Finally, you will begin a process of being sanctified to Christlikeness and living as His disciple. You are able to grow in grace and become less of self and more of Christ. As a believer lives in salvation and sanctification, the knowledge of eternity with Christ is an exciting reality. So if you have ever thought, “There has to be more than this,” turn to Jesus Christ and He will satisfy the longing in your heart. ☛

MARKET PLACE

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

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR: Chappell Hill Baptist Church in Gilbertown, Ala., is seeking a full-time pastor. Chappell Hill is a small Southern Baptist church located in rural Choctaw County. Resumes may be sent to: Don Giles, 4447 Lusk Road, Gilbertown, AL 36908, or email to: dwgiles58@gmail.com.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR: Prayerfully seeking a Southern Baptist pastor who preaches the uncompromised Word of God. If led by the Spirit to respond, send resume to: River Road Baptist Church, 3352 Warrior River Road, Hueytown, AL 35023, or notiHim@bellsouth.net.

TWO PART-TIME MUSICIANS: Pleasant View Baptist Church, Foley, seeks two part-time musicians: one to lead choir and congregation and another to accompany our adult choir and congregation on the piano. Our worship is traditional/blended. Information/application at 251-943-1845.

TWO POSITIONS AVAILABLE: Eastmont Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala., is seeking a full-time minister of music and children’s minister. Seminary degree preferred. Please email resume to: bhlewis@yahoo.com.

STUDENT & FAMILY MINISTRIES: First Baptist Church of Mt. Olive is now accepting resumes for a full-time associate pastor of students and family ministries. Please submit resumes or

questions by email to: sheila@fbcmo.org.

YOUTH MINISTER: Bethany Baptist Church is seeking a bivocational youth minister. Please send resumes to: Bethany Baptist Church, ATTN: Youth Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 7, Horton, AL 35980.

CHILDREN’S DIRECTOR: First Baptist Church of Piedmont is accepting applications for interim or part-time children’s director. Please mail resume to: 105 North Main Street, Piedmont, AL 36272, or email to: info@piedmontfbc.org.

CHILDREN’S MINISTER: FBC Leeds is seeking a part-time children’s minister. 20 hours a week. Contact Danny Mitchell at the church office at 205-699-6141. Email: kmyers@fbcleeds.org.

CHILDREN’S MINISTER: Good Hope Baptist Church in Eclectic, Ala., is seeking a bivocational or part-time children’s minister. It is desired that applicants have an academic degree of childhood development nature or experience with children’s ministry. Please submit resumes to: kmcghee32@gmail.com or call Libby McGhee at 334-312-0610 for more information.

OTHER POSITIONS

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: FBC Leeds is seeking a part-time financial secre-

tary. Financial experience is necessary and knowledge of ACS software is preferred. Contact Danny Mitchell at the church office at 205-699-6141. Email: kmyers@fbcleeds.org.

BUSINESS

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

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

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

CHRISTIAN VALUES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY: Christian Values Green Technology Company seeks mature business professionals for high-income opportunity. Home-based office. Hands-on support and apprenticeship-style training. For complete information, call Paul at 888-710-6994.

CHURCH CONSTRUCTION

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

TRAVEL/VACATION

BIBLE LAND DEPARTURES: 100s of Bible Land departures catering to Southern Baptists — Israel, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Britain, Jordan, Egypt, etc. www.pilgrimgtours.com, 1-800-322-0788.

ALASKA TOUR: Alaska tour by Deluxe Touring Coach round-trip from Georgia. 31 days, June 16–July 16, 2014. 20 years of Alaska experience. Great references. 34 already signed up. Only 10 spaces left. For information: www.GeriGadderTours.com or call 229-638-0960.

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

GULF SHORES: 1/2/3 BR luxury beachfront condos and 4 BR beach resort house. Owner direct saves you \$\$\$\$. Call Chris at 1-800-713-6435, or cashley945@earthlink.net.

Baptist NEWS BRIEFS

COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES

Attempt to drop Baylor homosexuality ban vetoed

WACO, Texas — Baylor University's student body president has vetoed a resolution to drop a ban on homosexuality from the university's code of conduct.

Baylor's Student Senate voted in late October to drop "homosexual acts" from the Waco, Texas, university's sexual misconduct code and substitute the phrase "nonmarital consensual deviate sexual intercourse."

Trenton Garza, the senate member who sponsored the resolution, said the current policy is unfair because it allows sexual expression between heterosexual couples that is prohibited for gays.

Student body president Wesley Hodges said he exercised his veto because the university's board of regents likely would not have granted final approval for the change, and because the full student body did not get a chance to weigh in on the topic.

On Oct. 31 the Student Senate came up short of a needed two-thirds vote to override the veto.

Controversy over Baylor's sexual misconduct policy sparked controversy in March when former women's basketball star Brittney Griner told ESPN that Kim Mulkey, her college head coach, urged players not to be open publicly about their sexuality.

CP giving below budget but ahead of last year

NASHVILLE — Contributions to the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) in October were 0.07 percent above last year's opening month of the convention's fiscal year.

As of Oct. 31, gifts received by the Executive Committee for distribution through the CP Allocation Budget totaled \$13,611,434.14, or \$9,133.50 above the \$13,602,300.64, received in October 2012.

Meanwhile designated giving of \$3,204,233.24 during October was 4.82 percent, or \$147,225.45, above gifts of \$3,057,007.79 received last October. This total includes only those gifts received and distributed by the Executive Committee and does not reflect designated gifts contributed directly to SBC entities.

The October total of \$13,611,434.14 is 85.29 percent of the \$15,958,333.33 monthly allocation budget to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America.



SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford to Highlight International Education Week:** Samford University will observe International Education Week Nov. 18–22 with special presentations, movies and events representing different parts of the world.

Each day will focus on a special region to celebrate the various cultures represented by the Samford community, said Samford director of international education Angela D. Ferguson. The geographic areas of emphasis are:

► Nov. 18 — Latin America and the Caribbean, with salsa lessons and a 5:30 p.m. talk on mining practices in Columbia

► Nov. 19 — Africa and the Middle East

► Nov. 20 — Asia, with a program, "The Real China," that will include an introduction to Chinese culture and lessons on painting Chinese characters and preparing dumplings and other traditional Chinese treats

► Nov. 21 — Europe, featuring servings of German coffee and cake

► Nov. 22 — North America

Throughout the week, displays on Ben Brown Plaza will provide information on international trips and events that are available to students. Other programs, including

movies and speakers, will be held at 7 p.m.

The effort is a collaboration of Ferguson's office and the Samford office of international student development, the International Student Leadership Council, the department of world languages and cultures, and other groups that promote languages and cultures. International Education Week is a national initiative of the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of State.

For information, contact Ferguson at adfergus@samford.edu or 205-726-4041.

JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson College Senior Honored:** Judson College senior Katie Hamner recently received a fellowship award from Sigma Beta Delta (SBD), an international honor society recognizing and promoting achievement in business, management and administration.

Hamner is a member of Tri Beta, the biology honor society, SBD and the Business Club. She was an officer in the Science Club and serves as a Student Government Association representative and as a member of Social Committee.

Hamner plans to use the \$1,000 scholarship to help pay for graduate

school, where she plans to pursue a master of business administration and a master of accountancy and sit for the CPA exams before possibly going on to law school.

UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **UMobile Named 'Military Friendly':** The University of Mobile (UMobile) has been named a "Military Friendly School" for 2014 by Victoria Media.

UMobile is ranked in the top 15 percent of "Military Friendly Schools" nationwide in a survey of more than 12,000 schools.

UMobile participates in the Post-9/11 GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program, which provides education benefits for veterans and their dependents. UMobile also is a member of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Consortium and is recognized as having flexible policies that allow servicemembers and their families to complete degrees when college is interrupted because of deployment or new assignments.

In exchange for a paid college education and a guaranteed post-college career, Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets commit to serve in the U.S. military after graduation.

Currently 64 students receive some form of military-related education benefits.



Photo courtesy of Northside Baptist Church

NORTHSIDE PIANIST/ORGANIST RETIRES

Northside Baptist Church, Jasper, in Walker Baptist Association, honors Eva Mae Posey (center), who served as church pianist/organist for 50 years before retiring in September. Pastor David Byrd presented her with a plaque and her son, Sonny Posey, mayor of Jasper, read a proclamation declaring Oct. 6 officially Eva Mae Posey Day. Posey's father, Jim P. Drummond, was the first pastor of Northside Baptist when it was established in 1928.



By Judy A. Taylor
Special to The Alabama Baptist

Someone You Should Know

DANNY J. BARKSDALE

Glennwood Baptist Church, Morris
North Jefferson Baptist Association

FAVORITE VERSE: 1 Corinthians 10:13

FAVORITE HYMN: "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory"

HOBBIES: Coin collecting and working in the yard

FAMILY STATUS: Married to Elizabeth (Liz) for 45 years; two daughters, Holly Beck and Heather Manning; and four grandchildren



BARKSDALE

Celebrating his 66th birthday in 2013, Danny Barksdale has been involved in church ministry most of his life and has been a member of Glennwood Baptist Church, Morris, for 18 years. His exuberant spirit and warm smile reflect his love for others. Always serving, he is an inspiration to all who know him.

Q: How did you come to know the Lord?

A: I was blessed to be raised in a Christian home and was saved at the age of 13 while attending Vacation Bible School at Ninth Avenue Baptist Church, Birmingham.

Q: What church ministries are you involved in?

A: Over the years, I have served as Sunday School director (and) teacher, children's director (and) assisted with youth groups. Currently serving as deacon chair, I have found deacon family ministry especially rewarding; also church outreach. Being a "church greeter" on Sunday mornings is something I love to do.

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

A: That personal relationship with Christ made it clear to me that God really knows me and has a plan for my life. Throughout the

events in my life — marriage, military service, work life, sickness and health — I've sensed and trusted the hand of God. I can face tomorrow.

Q: What are some of your favorite things about church?

A: The whole idea about church inspires me. To enter the building is a blessing as I'm excited to worship and I'm reminded of how special my church family, my pastor and his wife are to me. Our pastor often says that we get to do things for Christ. That puts my life into perspective — I get to serve Him.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For November 17

Explore the Bible

By Jay T. Robertson

Assistant Professor of Christian Ministries, University of Mobile

FEELING INSECURE?

John 10:1-5, 7-10, 14-18, 25-30

Everyone wants to feel secure. People install security systems in their homes. They download software to protect their computer systems. They pay a company to keep their identities safe. None of these efforts are 100 percent reliable. In spite of all of these measures, thieves can still break into homes, viruses can still infect computers and identities can still be stolen. As a result, people begin to wonder if anything is secure. Some people even wonder about their relationship with God. Is it really secure? What must be done to secure that relationship? The Bible teaches that God's pleasure in us is not based on our performance for Him. Rather God's pleasure in us is based on Jesus' performance for us.

Jesus Guides Us (1-5)

Jesus employs the beautiful imagery of the shepherd. The shepherd would call out to his sheep by name and the sheep would follow their shepherd, for they know his voice. Just as the shepherd would lead, feed, direct and protect his sheep, so Jesus, our Good Shepherd, leads, feeds, directs and protects His followers. People who truly belong to God listen to and believe the words of Jesus.

The shepherd imagery depicts leadership, protection and provision. The sheep imagery depicts our dependence on a shepherd. Being called a sheep in the Bible does not exalt us in any way. The designation is actually quite humbling. Sheep are dumb, directionless and defenseless. For a sheep to survive, it had to have a good shepherd. For us to survive in this Genesis 3 sinful world, we must have the Good Shepherd.

Jesus Gives Us Life (7-10)

Jesus contrasts His loving care for the sheep with those who "came before," an apparent allusion to messianic pretenders and the religious establishment that had dogged Jesus' every step. These, Jesus says, are really thieves and robbers who do not love the sheep and do not have their best interest at heart.

In contrast to the many false shepherds of Israel, Jesus, the very "door" to the sheepfold, will provide eternal life and salvation for all those who enter in through Him. Entrance into the sheepfold is by faith in the shepherd. Thus belief in Christ characterizes those who are His sheep. That His sheep "will go in and out and find life and have it abundantly" represents the fullness of life and freedom found only in the Good Shepherd.

In verse 10, Jesus paints a dramatic contrast between Israel's true shepherd and the "thief" whose real agenda is death and destruction. In contrast, the Good Shepherd has come in order that through Him the sheep "may have life and have it abundantly." Jesus did not come to add years to your life; He came to add life to your years.

Jesus Gave His Life for Us (14-18)

Jesus' sheep know Him as their personal shepherd, and Jesus knows them with the same degree of knowledge, love and commitment expressed within the Trinity itself. The awesome love the Father and the Son have for each other is extended to embrace those whom the Son calls His own.

That Jesus has "other sheep that are not of this fold" indicates that His saving love extends beyond the boundaries of ethnic Israel. The Gentiles who believe in Christ will be brought into His fold where all believers without distinctions of race or class will be "one flock" under the loving guidance of "one shepherd."

The Son voluntarily gives His life in sacrifice for the sheep in obedience to the Father's command and then takes it up again in the resurrection. The Son alone has full authority to both give His life in death and to take it up again.

Jesus Gives Us a Guarantee (25-30)

Those sheep who belong to Jesus' flock are characterized by obedience, recognition of the shepherd and allegiance to Him. As a consequence of His timeless love for them, He not only grants them eternal life but He also guarantees their eternal preservation. 

Bible Studies for Life

By James Riley Strange

Associate Professor of Religion, Samford University

THE BIG PICTURE

Genesis 37:5-8, 26-28; 50:15-21

It will help us to set the story in context. First Jacob learned destructive favoritism from good teachers: his own parents. Isaac and Rebecca did it (recall the hatred they fomented between the twins Esau and Jacob, the younger of the two), and Isaac learned it from Abraham and Sarah (Abraham banished Isaac's older brother, Ishmael, at Sarah's insistence).

Second those sibling rivalries, fed by parental favoritism, remind us that in the Old Testament the older brother never inherits, even though by rights he should. Cain's murder of Abel constitutes the first instance.

Third hatred always seems reasonable to the one who hates. Usually the infraction or insult is real. Nevertheless God expects His children to choose another way.

(37:5-8)

The justifications for hatred are palpable. Joseph, the second youngest and by rights one of two brothers with the least authority, deploys the only power he has in the most insidious ways he can. He tattles on Dan, Naphtali, Gad and Asher, who were born to the servants Bilhah and Zilpah (that is, not to the sisters Leah and Rachel, Isaac's legitimate wives; see 30:1-13). His father Jacob loves him the most because he is the son of Jacob's favorite wife, Rachel (because Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin, the youngest, he might not be as beloved as Joseph; 35:16-21).

Jacob gives only Joseph a striped robe ("long-sleeved robe" might be a more accurate translation). As if that were not enough cause for envy, Joseph taunts his older brothers by telling them about dreams in which they one day will bow to him. Never mind that the dreams come true; Jacob is right when he tells Joseph to keep his mouth shut.

(37:26-28)

Anger is one thing, but nothing justi-

fies what the brothers do to Joseph and the crushing grief they cause their own father. Notice that their actions don't improve their relationships with Jacob in any way. Moreover in one of the Bible's greatest ironic turns they set in motion the fulfillment of the very dreams they despised Joseph for having and which they sought to foil (v. 20). Of course once Joseph has spoken the dreams, we the readers know what will happen, at least in outline. Despite the drama of Joseph's early misadventures in Potiphar's household, we know the brothers' actions are futile, and every bad turn becomes a stepping stone for Joseph's success.

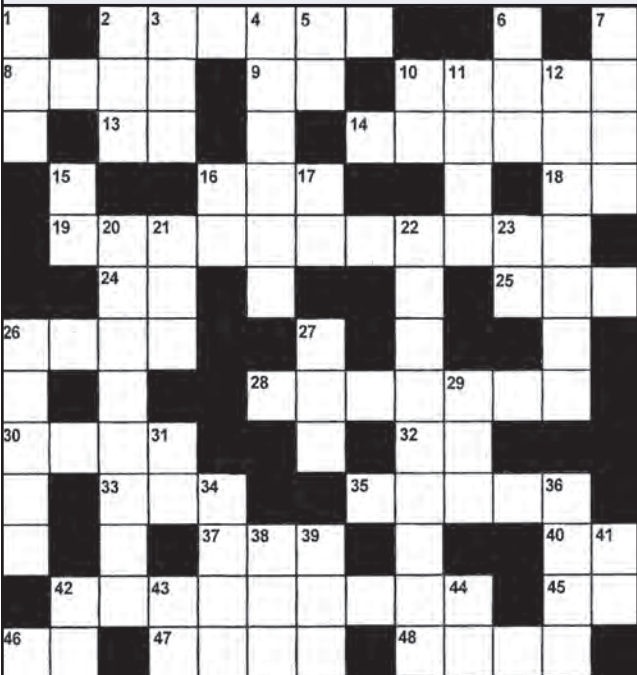
(50:15-21)

Joseph's refusal to punish his brothers is one of the few spots in the saga in which he shows mature character. Note that the tearful reunion happens only after he takes the opportunity to torment both them and his father through his shenanigans regarding Benjamin. Others have pointed out that he averts the crisis of the Egyptian famine and profits greatly by trading on insider information, as it were. Only he knows that the famine is coming, so he devises a plan to collect the Egyptians' grain during the years of plenty and then sell it back to them during the years of famine (after the exodus, Israelites probably took some pleasure in the hardship Joseph caused the Egyptians).

That is to say, like his forebears and descendants, Joseph has both good and reprehensible character traits. His goodness is not the point of the story. Rather the point is God's ability to turn evil intent and actions to good. No one, including Joseph, could see that until Jacob's death. At the end of the story, therefore, we find a call for the endurance of the saints. Has someone wronged us? How willing are we [a] to admit our own culpability, [b] to forgive the wrong and [c] to wait patiently for the good that God can bring? We might not recognize it until long after it has happened. 

Christian Crossword

Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

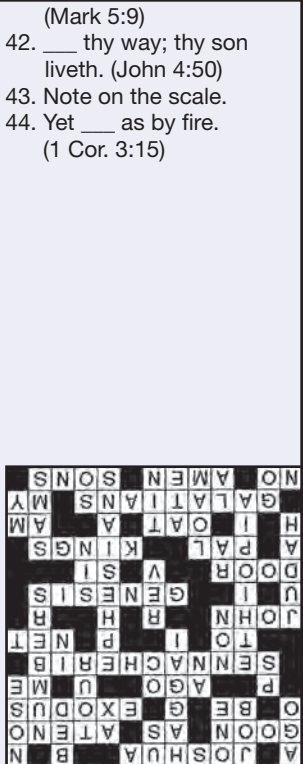


Across

2. Charge ___ and encourage him. (Deut. 3:28)
8. Terrorist.
9. Ye shall be ___ gods. (Gen. 3:5)
10. I ___ pleasant bread. (Dan. 10:3)
13. To ___ or not to ___.
14. Second book of the Bible.
16. Past.
18. He shall cry unto ___. (Ps. 89:26)
19. The Lord saved Hezekiah ... from ... (2 Chron. 32:22)
24. Ascending up ___ Jerusalem.
25. I will let down the ___. (Luke 5:5)
26. ___ the Baptist.
28. First book of the Bible.
30. Rolled back the stone from the ___. (Matt. 28:2)
32. Yes. (Spanish)

Down

33. Buddy.
35. O.T. books of the Bible.
37. A grain often used for cereal.
40. I ___ that I ___.
42. O foolish ___. (Gal. 3:1)
45. ___ Lord and ___ God.
46. Made himself of ___ reputation. (Phil. 2:7)
47. So be it.
48. These are the three ___ of Noah. (Gen. 9:19)
11. Organized travel.
12. Fourth book of the Bible.
15. Postscript. (abbr.)
16. ___ angel of the Lord. (Luke 1:11)
17. Ocean. (abbr.)
20. Behold, a man of ___. (Acts 8:27)
21. Prefix for not.
22. Tenth book of the New Testament.
23. That I am ___ the Father. (John 14:10)
26. A son of Leah. (Gen. 35:23)
27. Last book of the Bible. (abbr.)
29. ___ no more. (John 5:14)
31. Egyptian sun god.
34. Rich soil.
36. Belonging to Sam.
38. They ... ___ the sacrifices of the dead. (Ps. 106:28)
39. A metal.
41. ___ name is Legion.





Photos courtesy of Capitol CMG Label Group

Bellarive's album, 'The Heartbeat,' captures the group's desire to cultivate songs that draw listeners closer to the Lord and deepen their relationship with Him.

True worship

Worship band Bellarive desires to craft innovative, inspiring songs

By Leann Callaway
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The worship band Bellarive is made up of six friends with a common goal: to lead others before the throne of God.

Their desire to craft innovative and inspiring songs designed to usher people into the presence of God

has gifted the group with many opportunities to lead worship for churches, colleges, missions organizations and conferences.

"It's so cool to step into a space with other believers and worship God together," lead singer Sean Curran said. "It's something that really motivates and stirs us to do this. It's the core of who we are and what we love."

In addition to Curran, the band is comprised of Melissa Mage and her brother Mike, Josh Luker, Zach Glotfelty and Kenny Werner.

The group's name derives from a street near Curran's house, where the band would regularly meet to discuss songs.

"When I was in college, I met the guys from Bellarive and we started writing songs," Curran said. "That's kind of how the band got started. Choosing a name was actually the last step for us. We had done all of the songwriting and recording at my house, which was kind of a special place to the group. We came up with the idea to take a street name in my neighborhood and change the letters around, to make it kind of mean 'beautiful river.'"

Often songwriting inspiration starts flowing as band members are leading worship at events and

seeing people respond to biblical truths. Their album, "The Heartbeat," captures the group's desire to cultivate songs that draw listeners closer to the Lord and deepen their relationship with Him.

"Most of the time, the songs come out of times of worship — whether it's in a worship service or at home in my room," Curran said. "A lot of times, song ideas just come from spending time with the Lord and kind of having a bit of a revelation about His love or His glory — a different glimpse of what He did for us, and it kind of stirs our hearts. So we'll just grab onto that and base the content lyrically on that moment, when God gives you a new piece of His glory, opening your eyes to a new side of Him. That's the floor plan of the song, and we just kind of take it from there."

In fall 2013, Bellarive will be on a nationwide tour with The Digital Age. Then they will join The Rend Collective Experiment and Audrey Assad on "The Campfire Tour." In addition, the group will be leading worship at the National Youth Workers Convention in Nashville, and they are scheduled to lead worship for upcoming Student Life conferences.

During these events, Bellarive desires to keep the spotlight off of themselves and focused on Christ.

"When you strip everything away, the goal has nothing to do with music and everything to do with Jesus," Curran said. "We hope that when people go to a worship service or listen to the album, that they would do more than just listen. We hope that they would kneel at the feet of the Father and praise Him for all that He is and for the love and grace that He has given us." ❧



TOP 10 best-selling books

FICTION

- 1. The Harbinger**
By Jonathan Cahn (Charisma Media)
- 2. Unspoken**
By Dee Henderson (Baker)
- 3. The Secret Keeper, Home to Hickory Hollow Series #4**
By Beverly Lewis (Baker)
- 4. Trapped, Private Justice Series #2**
By Irene Hannon (Baker)
- 5. Secrets Over Sweet Tea**
By Denise Hildreth Jones (Tyndale)
- 6. Return to Me, Restoration Chronicles Series #1**
By Lynn Austin (Baker)
- 7. The Shack**
By William P. Young (Windblown Media)
- 8. An Untamed Heart: The Prequel**
By Lauraine Snelling (Baker)
- 9. Cross Roads**
By William P. Young (FaithWords)
- 10. Wings of Glass**
By Gina Holmes (Tyndale)

NONFICTION

- 1. Jesus Calling**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 2. Break Out!**
By Joel Osteen (FaithWords)
- 3. Not a Fan**
By Kyle Idleman (Zondervan)
- 4. Jesus Calling, Large-Print Deluxe Edition**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 5. Emotions**
By Charles F. Stanley (Howard)
- 6. Si-Cology 1**
By Si Robertson with Mark Schlabach (Howard)
- 7. You'll Get Through This**
By Max Lucado (Thomas Nelson)
- 8. Jesus Calling, Women's Edition**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 9. Jesus Calling, Deluxe Edition**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 10. Love Does**
By Bob Goff (Thomas Nelson)

Source: Christian Book Expo

Borey (far right holding a Bible) shares the gospel with a group of friends in Southeast Asia. Despite heavy persecution, the young evangelist continues to travel to distant villages to tell others about Christ.



BP photo

Meeting 'the true God'

Persecution, poverty small price for young Southeast Asian believer

Sweating under the hot Southeast Asian sun, a young man watches fire ants swarm across the branches of a tree. He stretches out a gaunt arm and scoops up a handful of the red insects.

He soaks the ants in water and lays them in the sun. Later he salts them and puts the dried ants in his mouth. It's a poor excuse for a meal, but the ants are all Borey has.

The Southeast Asian believer has given away all his money to help send sick villagers to the hospital and to buy food for those with even less to eat than he has.

"You cannot serve God being sick," Borey's mentor, Pumehana Funakoshi, admonishes. Funakoshi, a Southern Baptist worker, has come to Borey's corner of Southeast Asia to share Jesus' love.

"You need to take care of your health," she said.

Funakoshi knows how much the young man has suffered. For the sake of proclaiming Christ's name, Borey has been beaten, ostracized and threatened by family and has even turned down lucrative job offers.

Despite all this, he has persevered for seven years — since Funakoshi first led him to Christ — in sharing the gospel.

Borey first met Funakoshi when she was teaching Sunday School under a stilt house in the city. He traveled by bicycle from his village to attend. Borey listened as Funakoshi told Bible stories.

For a month, the shy teenager listened. Then he told Funakoshi he wanted to know more. After she shared with him, he prayed to accept Christ.

"I've found the true God," Borey exclaimed. "I've got to tell my family now."

Borey jumped on his bicycle and began the ride back to his village. But later that

day he returned to Funakoshi's house, crestfallen, explaining through tears his family's spiteful reaction to his newfound faith.

"Everyone hates me," he said, telling Funakoshi that the village despised him.

"Why are you believing in a foreign religion?" his mother had demanded. "You are not my son."

Regardless of the rejection, Borey left the city at 3 a.m. every Sunday, riding three hours to reach his village and share the gospel with his family. Despite her initial anger,

his mother still spoke with him. What Borey didn't know was that, little by little, the gospel was seeping into her heart.

After only a month, Borey saw the fruits of his labor. That day he walked with several of his family members into the flooded rice fields. There he baptized 12 new believers, including his sisters — and his mother.

Against decades of family tradition, she now worshipped Jesus as Lord and Savior.

For a while, Borey's village was transformed. Nearly 30 people professed faith in Christ. They began

to pray to Jesus and cut off the strings they wore to ward off evil spirits.

One day a village boy came to Borey, his hand swollen and red from an insect bite. Borey prayed for him, his hand resting on the boy's arm.

When Borey opened his eyes, the hand was still infected. Borey continued to pray, watching in amazement with others as the swelling and redness began to disappear.

"Jesus healed me," the little boy exclaimed. "Jesus healed me."

Borey also found healing from a long-standing, emotional wound. At Funakoshi's urging, Borey went in search of his father, who had left his mother before Borey was born. Borey's mother had always said his father was dead.

When an aunt introduced father and son several years earlier, Borey had refused to acknowledge their relationship. Now, as a Christian, he found his father frail and dying of cancer.

Borey took his father to the hospital, where he led him to Christ. His father lived for three more months and reconciled with his wife and children.

But along with these miracles came intense persecution. Borey's brothers never accepted Christ. An older brother sometimes came at midnight with other villagers to beat Borey.

The group of about 30 worshippers dwindled to only a few of his own family members as villagers forbade their children and wives to visit Borey's house. One woman destroyed her Bible and beat her children for going to worship.

"It's so hard to be a Christian," Borey told Funakoshi. "But I know that this is the true God. But why do we have to be so persecuted and hurt? The neighbors call names to my mom and they curse Jesus' name. We're one of the poorest families."

"No prophet is accepted in his hometown," Funakoshi told Borey, quoting Luke 4:24. "They didn't welcome Jesus either."

Undeterred, Borey continued to preach the gospel in other villages. One of Borey's brothers stole the motorcycle he used to travel; God provided another one.

"My brother is so furious with me, more than ever," Borey told Funakoshi. "He and my neighbors want to force me to stop telling people about Jesus Christ. They say I and my mom are an embarrassment to our neighborhood because we still believe and sing praises to Jesus and are still the poorest people in our village."

Focused on ministry

"He also said I am the foolish one because I have the brains and talent to become someone important in society, and I'm wasting my life telling people of my God and Savior," Borey said.

His brother told him to accept a job he was offered in the government, which would pay him well above the average monthly income of a village office worker. Borey turned that job down, plus two other opportunities for sizeable salaries.

"Thank you, sir, but I already have a job,"

Borey told the factory owner who wanted to hire him, knowing that a full-time job would split his attention from his ministry.

"Why don't you think about yourself and your mom?" Borey's brother demanded. "You and Mom have no land, no house. Who will take care of you both?"

Borey replied calmly, "My God will take care of us."

While he hopes to one day study medicine, Borey knows this is his time to spread God's Word.

"I don't want to stop telling my people about Jesus Christ," he told Funakoshi. "God is doing miracles, and I am so excited seeing people's hearts and lives change as they believe and receive the Lord in their lives."

Sharing Christ's love

"People in other villages where I teach are so hungry to hear about Jesus Christ ... I know this is the place where God will ignite His fire and it will spread throughout the community."

One of Borey's brothers said that if he does not stop telling people about Christ, he'll banish him from the village.

"Your heart is to bring your people to the true God, and so this is your time to go," Funakoshi told him. "If your brother wants to keep you out of your home village, well, go to other villages that are hungry for the true God and welcome the Good News. Isn't it where you are preaching now?"

His teachings unwelcome at home, Borey now travels to far villages to teach.

While his own brothers threaten him, other villagers invite Borey to sleep in their homes so they can hear more about Christ. He teaches from Matthew 5, saying, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness." They, too, will be persecuted for their faith, he tells them.

Seeing the courage in Borey and other believers has increased Funakoshi's own faith, she said.

These people have given up everything — wealth, family, comfort and more — because they love Christ.

"Being here, I have seen extraordinary faith, miracles and what the New Testament church was like. I am blessed and humbled by these who truly live for God," she said. (BP)

*"People in other villages
where I teach are so
hungry to hear about
Jesus Christ ... I know
this is the place where
God will ignite His fire and
it will spread throughout
the community."*

**Borey
Southeast Asian believer**