

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



May 8, 2014
Vol. 179, No. 19

Reporting. Connecting. Inspiring.

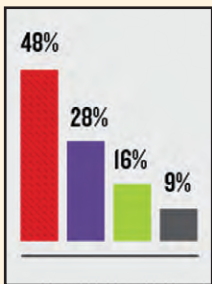
Toll free 1-800-803-5201
www.thealabamabaptist.org

INSIDE



Churches across state participate in Bible Reading Marathons

◆ Page 3



Language, work key to successful integration into American society, study shows

◆ Pages 4-5



Churches, other groups needed to provide meals for kids this summer

◆ Page 7



Trail of DESTRUCTION

Photo by Gary Hardin

Bob Wilson of Sand Mountain Baptist Association helps clear fallen trees following the April 28 tornadoes that hit the state.

Alabama Baptist disaster relief volunteers deploy after April 28 tornadoes

By Gary Hardin
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers have responded forcefully after about 20 tornadoes and strong straight-line winds inflicted damage in 31 of Alabama's 67 counties April 28. The latest death toll is nine. At press time the total number of injuries had not yet been calculated.

The tornadoes ripped through the state of Alabama, three years and one day after the deadly tornado outbreak that occurred April 27, 2011. According to AccuWeather, the first tornado

watch for the latest outbreak was placed on parts of Alabama at 1:39 p.m. April 28, and by 8:42 p.m. Gov. Robert Bentley had declared every county was under a state of emergency.

At 3 a.m. April 29 David Patty, director of missions for Sand Mountain Baptist Association, was helping enlist a team of Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers to serve in the Sardis area of Etowah County.

"We have been going at it hard," Patty said. "Many people in the area still have entrances to their homes blocked by fallen trees."

Ty Corbin, District 3 disaster relief coordinator, said about 50 volunteers — chain saw teams, a show-

er unit, heavy equipment operators and a feeding team — were serving in the Sardis community. "Sardis suffered tremendous property damage over a 4- to 5-mile radius," he explained.

Help from associations

Corbin said teams from seven associations were helping in Sardis — Autauga, Calhoun, Cleburne, DeKalb, Elmore, Etowah and Marshall. Bethlehem Baptist Church, Sardis, served as the host church.

In North Alabama, Limestone County was hit hard. The Weather Channel listed tornadoes ranking up to EF3 in Limestone County with speeds of 140 mph and traveling

more than 15 miles in 27 minutes. A string of residences and businesses along U.S. 72 took direct hits from the storm system.

Jerry Butler, Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief "white cap" (top-level DR leader onsite) helping coordinate the relief effort in Limestone County, said, "This area took a hard lick. The tornado stayed on the ground for miles, and everything in its path got knocked down."

The Madison Baptist Association sent 21 chain saw cutters and five chaplains to Limestone County. "Our team has been working north of downtown Athens. It's real bad here," said Wayne Miller, disaster (See 'Super,' page 8)

Coming next week...

Senior Adult EVANGELISM

Conference coverage



COMMENT

Family — the First School of Christian Living

Where does one first develop a personal sense of value? Where does one first learn about acceptance and rejection? Where does one first learn the joy of giving or the importance of work?

Where does one learn perseverance in the face of disappointment? Where does one first experience what it is like to be forgiven or to be reconciled to another? Where does one first learn that God is love?

If you answered “the family,” then you share the belief that the family is supposed to be the first school of Christian living.

Obviously the family is important. God created humankind to live as families. When one becomes a Christian, one is adopted into the “family of God.” In fact, the Church is referred to as “the family of God.” From a theological point of view, family relationships are important to God and to God’s people.

From a secular point of view the family is equally important. The family is the foundational unit of society. It is often said if families are strong, then communities will be strong. If communities are strong, then nations will be strong. If nations are strong, then our world will be strong.

The importance of families is one reason Southern Baptists will focus attention on the Christian Home during the week of May 11–17. It is time to remember that the family is the first school of Christian living.

Natural bonds

Family is not limited to just husband-wife or parent-child relationships. Family is a broad term that encompasses natural bonds of flesh and blood. It includes grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Family is increasingly multigenerational, especially as people are living longer.

But the natural bonds are only beginning points that enable human beings to turn families into communities of grace. Families can be characterized by growing relationships that help members mature as human beings and as Christians.

Transforming the family into a grace community is the gift of love — God’s love lived out by all who know Him as Lord and Savior. The



THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

apostle Paul’s famous essay on love (1 Cor. 13) was not written as marriage counseling to soon-to-be brides and grooms. When Paul wrote, “The greatest of these is love” he was writing to a divided “family of God” in Corinth that had forsaken its role as a grace community.

Love is supposed to be the cement that holds the family of God together against all the strains and pressures. Love is supposed to be the stimulant that causes people to mature in relationships. Love is supposed to be the motivator that prompts one to service in behalf of the little ones, the sick and the aged of the family.

Self-sacrifice is not a natural human emotion. But love for the family enables one to set aside personal goals and ambitions because of the importance of others. Mutual self-giving is not scriptural guidance just for husbands and wives. It applies to and is required of all members of a family striving to be a grace community.

Despite best efforts, times of misunderstandings arise in families. Who does not know of tensions, even conflicts, that have left deep wounds in family members or even the family as a whole? A Christian family should be characterized by openness, understanding and patience. These are

consistent with what the apostle Paul describes as “fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5:22ff.

Instead one occasionally finds selfishness, discord and conflict. These are akin to what the apostle describes as displays of the sinful nature (Gal. 5:19ff).

Praise God that just as He forgives our sin and reconciles us to Himself, families can know the joy of forgiveness and reconciliation. Wounds do not have to be fatal, and families do not have to be fractured. Unity and wholeness can be restored with confession and forgiveness. What an important lesson to learn in the first school of Christian living.

From earliest times the Bible places responsibility for transmitting the faith from generation to generation on the family. Studies continue to affirm the importance of family influence. One study found that 7 out of 8 respondents who said they were raised in a Christian home still claimed to be Christians. Another study reported in *Christianity Today* indicated that 4 out of 10 grandchildren are in the same faith tradition as their grandparents and the influence of grandparents is growing as more and more children are around their grandparents.

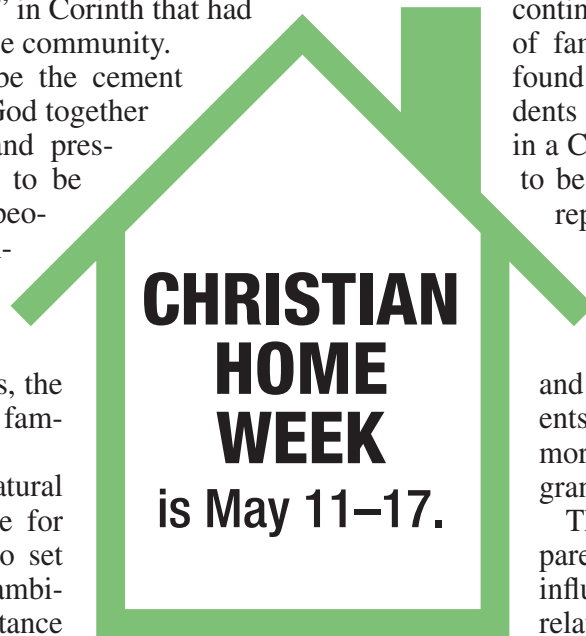
That report also found that parents continue to have more influence on their children in relationship to shaping faith and values than any other influencer despite the many changes

in culture and society.

Influence of parents and grandparents is not based on what they say as much as on what they do, researchers found. It is called modeling. Parents and grandparents who provide consistent modeling of the values of a grace community generally tended to develop children and other family members who emulated those values.

One researcher said it plainly when he shared, “Again and again we saw that fervent faith cannot compensate for a distant, inflexible (parent). Being a role model is irrelevant if the child doesn’t feel the parent’s example is worth following.”

Transforming flesh and blood relationships into a grace community involves such qualities as availability, involvement, nurturing, consistency, personal warmth and concern as well as a commitment to God and to teach His Word. Turning a family into a grace community is a full-time calling. It is not something for the nominally concerned. It also is a God-given responsibility because God made the family the first school of Christian living.



LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR

BLOOD MOONS

I was disappointed in your report of “blood moons” (“‘Blood moon’ lunar eclipses not a sign, Baptist professors say” in the April 24 issue).

I have watched and heard John Hagee discuss this subject more than four times.

Never have I heard him predict the Lord’s return other than bibli-

cal (He is coming for us) and that is a surety. But the time will be His choosing.

You stated in the article that Hagee suggests there is something “big” coming for Israel and again suggest that Hagee is saying “the Rapture” and Armageddon.

Never has Hagee said anything so ir-

responsible to my knowledge.

John Martin
Goshen, Ala.

EDITOR’S NOTE — The “blood moons” article was a combination of wire service reports. Hagee’s book will be reviewed to clarify any confusion.





"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 — \$13.75
Individual — \$22.25

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

**DR. BOBBY S. TERRY
EDITOR**

Jennifer Davis Rash
Executive 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, 2013
as judged by Associated
Church Press, Evangelical
Press Association or Religious
Communicators Council



BIRMINGHAM

Photo by Neisha Fuson



OZARK

Photo courtesy of Kimberly Carver

Pastors, church staff, members and others from multiple denominations and faiths read Scripture at Bible Reading Marathons across Alabama. **Right:** George Robinson, member of Hephzibah Baptist Church, Troy, speaks with two Troy University students from China.

'The Word of God is true'



TROY

Photo courtesy of Linda Adams

Churches across state participate in Bible Reading Marathons

By Neisha Fuson
The Alabama Baptist

The fourth annual Birmingham Bible Reading Marathon began April 27 at 6 p.m. on the front steps of Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham, and continued on through rain, wind and threat of tornadoes the next day.

"What greater comfort in a storm than the Word of God?" asked Elizabeth Rogers, public relations director for the 2014 Birmingham event.

She said as the rain began to fall everything was moved just inside the doors of the church and each reader continued to read aloud during his or her 15-minute time slot. They did have a plan and were prepared if the weather had turned severe, she said.

Stephen Manyama, pastor of Family Worship Center, Birmingham, opened the event with prayer and then began to read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Different languages

Rabbi Mark A. Peilen, who previously served Temple Beth Israel, Gadsden, was the second participant to read, first reading in English and then reading the same section in Hebrew.

According to Rogers, a member of Full-

ness Christian Fellowship, Vestavia Hills, at least seven languages were represented at the 2014 Birmingham marathon where for 90 consecutive hours, 360 people each read a portion of Scripture, ending on the National Day of Prayer on May 1.

But the reading was not just in Birmingham.

It was Kimberly Carver's first year to participate, and lead, the Bible Reading Marathon in Ozark.

For the past 11 years participants representing several denominations have read through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, outside Ozark's courthouse. For the past 10 years someone accepted Christ after hearing the gospel for the first time, she said.

Every year volunteers and readers come prepared to share the gospel and are manned with tracts to hand out.

Carver, a member of Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Ozark, said several people this year asked about churches they could attend and the gospel message was shared multiple times with passersby.

"We take for granted that we are people that have heard the gospel, but there are people that have never heard," Carver said.

In Troy, Linda Adams coordinated the eighth annual Bible Reading Marathon starting with a prayer walk around city hall and the courthouse. She's participated in several Troy Bible Reading Marathons but this too

was her first time to coordinate the event.

The city provides the use of a gazebo, a sound system, chairs and a tent for the marathon, Adams said, a member of Good Hope Baptist Church, Troy.

Interrupted by weather

The Troy marathon was interrupted late April 28 as severe weather made its way through town, but readers began again at 7:30 a.m. April 29.

Each marathon site had its own unique details. In Birmingham, for instance, photos were displayed from previous years and this year's participants were allowed to find and take their photo from the display with them when they left. There also was a shirt for all the readers to sign with part of 1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture," printed on the back.

Ninfa Austin, a member of Liberty Park Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills, who has coordinated every Birmingham marathon, said she has seen pastors, church staff, members and others from multiple denominations and faiths read the Bible each year.

And although each person may understand, interpret or practice his or her faith differently, Austin said everyone comes together unified at the Bible Reading Marathon.

"This is the one thing we always agree on — the Word of God is true." ❏

U.S. Residency Among Hispanic Americans

Finding a place

Hispanic faith, work and identity



69% Residents

19% Nonresidents

**12% Unsure/
declined**

Language, work key to successful integration into American society, study shows

It's the middle of another election year. And while midterms historically draw a smaller crowd of voters, they bring to the forefront of political conversation a variety of issues intended to energize voter bases and solidify party candidates. Predictably one of those issues is once again immigration.

With roughly 53 million Latinos living in America, they are now the nation's largest ethnic or race minority, making them an important voting demographic for any candidate. However, Hispanic Americans on the whole show up to vote at midterms less than other groups. Some candidates are hoping to change that by focusing on an issue that hits close to home.

Immigration, of course, is a hot-button topic and parties promote sharply divided views on the right approach. But all sides share a common concern when it comes to

what happens after immigration. What does successful integration into American society look like? Barna Group partnered with the American Bible Society, the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and OneHope for a study called Barna: Hispanics. Not all Americans — of Hispanic origin or otherwise — agree on the specifics of successful integration, but they can agree on the desire to see immigrants thrive in their new home. For most, success includes two key areas: language and work.

But first, a look at some immigration demographics.

Demographics: Heritage, Birthplace and Residency

While much immigration policy is focused on those who have very recently immigrated, most people of Hispanic origin living in the United States have been here for a while. On average, Hispanic Americans have lived in the U.S. for 25 years. Most of them — about

7 in 10 — are legal residents or citizens of the U.S.

More than half of all U.S. Hispanics did not immigrate but were born in the U.S. Of those who did immigrate, about 30 percent were born in Mexico. All other Latin and South American countries, including Puerto Rico, Cuba, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and other countries, have contributed less than 5 percent each to U.S. Hispanic immigrants.

Similarly the heritage of a majority of Hispanic Americans is Mexican (64 percent). One in 10 Hispanic Americans is of Puerto Rican descent and 1 in 20 is Cuban. Other family heritages include Spanish (3 percent), Dominican (2 percent) and Salvadoran (2 percent). Other groups contribute less than 1 percent to the Hispanic American population.

Language Fluency

Language barriers are a challenge most

immigrants have to navigate. While there are many Spanish-speaking services and establishments in the U.S., learning to speak English is still a critical component of long-term success for Hispanic American immigrants. Participants in the survey had the option to take it in English or Spanish. Most chose English — more than double the number who chose Spanish. Of those who chose to take the survey in English, nearly half (48 percent) said they also are very fluent in Spanish, and an additional 3 in 10 (28 percent) said they speak Spanish “pretty well.” Only 9 percent said they cannot speak Spanish at all and about 1 in 6 (16 percent) said they only speak Spanish “a little.”

Among those who opted into the Spanish survey, the numbers tell a different story. This is a group that is much less bilingual. Only 1 in 5 respondents said they speak English “very well.” An additional 3 in 10 (30 percent) can speak English “pretty well.” Nearly half of respondents (47 percent) said they speak English “just a little.” Only 3 percent said they can't speak English at all.

Church is one institution that offers Latinos an opportunity to participate in their first language; many faith communities host Spanish-speaking worship services. Perhaps surprisingly, however, more Hispanic Americans say they would prefer to attend an English-only service (32 percent) than a Spanish-only service (25 percent). Similarly more Hispanic Americans currently attend an English-only service (32 percent) than a Spanish-only service (18 percent).

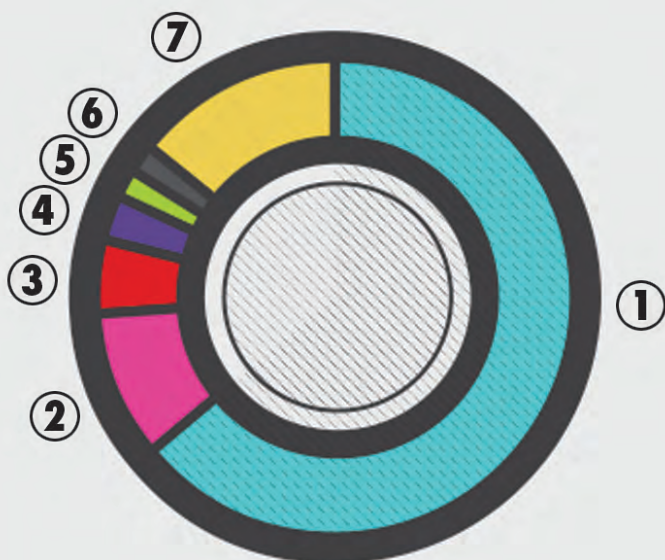
But bilingual services are what many Hispanic Americans are looking for. More than two-fifths (43 percent) of respondents expressed a desire to attend a bilingual service, while half (50 percent) said they attend a bilingual service now.

The Hispanic Work Ethic

Finding meaningful and fairly compensated work in their new home country is a significant aspect of successful integration for immigrants. Hispanic Americans are proud of their work ethic and see it as a key facet of their identity. In fact, 1 in 4 (24 percent) named it as the second-greatest contribution of the Hispanic community to American society; only “commitment to family” received

Family Heritage of Hispanic Americans

barna.org



- ① **64% Mexican**
- ② **10% Puerto Rican**
- ③ **5% Cuban**
- ④ **3% Spanish**
- ⑤ **2% Dominican**
- ⑥ **2% Salvadoran**
- ⑦ **14% Other**

more votes (36 percent). One in 5 Hispanic Americans (20 percent) said “cultural heritage” is the most important contribution, while 7 percent said “enjoyment of life,” 6 percent said “commitment to faith” and 8 percent chose none of the options.

As a rule, Hispanics see social value in their work. A strong majority — more than two-thirds (69 percent) — agree their work helps make the world a better place, while less than 1 in 5 disagree (16 percent). This number is slightly higher (72 percent) among Catholics and significantly lower (58 percent) among those who claim no faith or a faith other than Christianity. Similarly when asked if they find personal meaning and fulfillment in the work they do, Catholics (89 percent) and Protestants (86 percent) were slightly more likely than average (85 percent) to agree and much more likely than Hispanic Americans of no faith or faiths other than Christianity (64 percent).

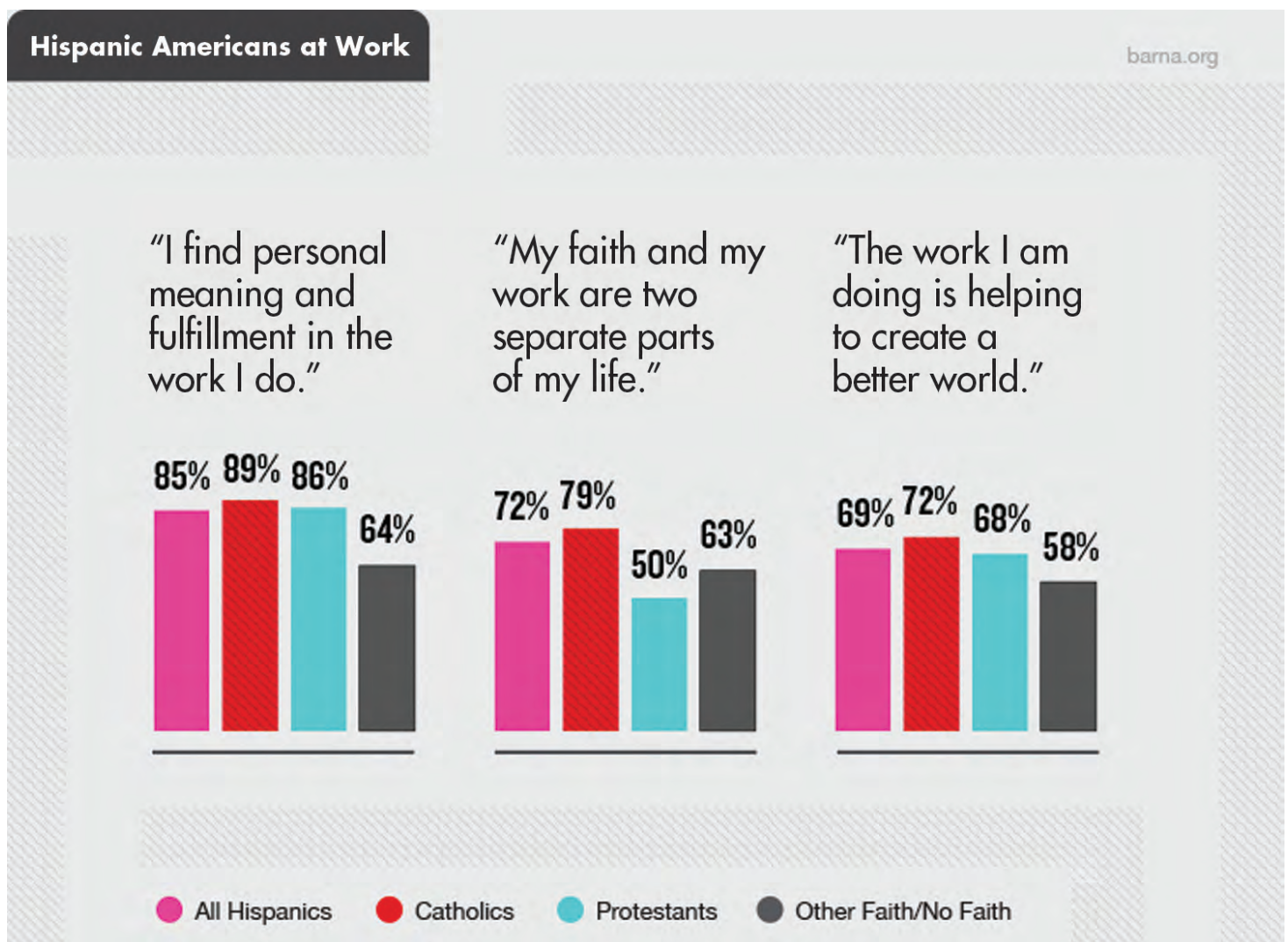
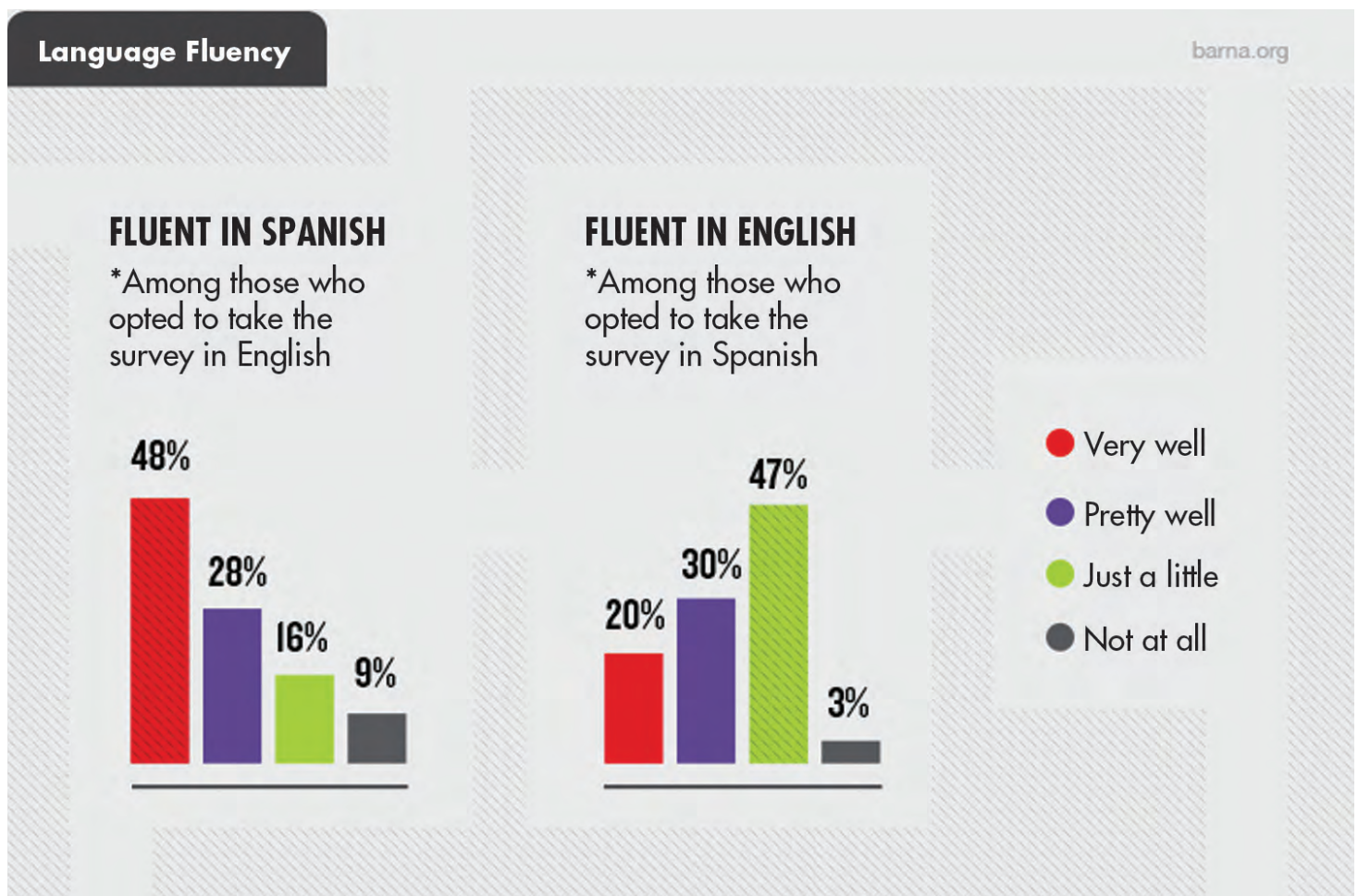
However, even while Christian Hispanic Americans are more likely to find personal meaning and fulfillment in their work and to believe it’s creating a better world, they don’t necessarily see a connection between their work and their faith. In fact, 8 in 10 Catholics (79 percent) and half of Protestants (50 percent) say their faith and their work are two separate parts of their life, with those of no/other faith falling between the two Christian segments (63 percent).

What the Research Means

Clint Jenkin, vice president of research at Barna Group, said, “There are a lot of groups — political, religious, commercial — who are working hard to connect with a Hispanic audience. But reaching Latinos effectively requires an understanding of diversity among Hispanic Americans. It’s tempting to think of ‘Hispanic’ as a single culture, when really it’s convenient shorthand for a complex group of cultures. When we dig into the data, we find diverse attitudes and behaviors that reflect this complexity. Factors such as language of preference, nation of origin (including the U.S.) and level of acculturation all influence how Hispanics engage with broader American culture. Anyone who wants to connect with Hispanic Americans, including faith leaders, needs to do their homework to appreciate these engagement factors.

“On the religious front, we see similar, hard-to-pigeonhole complexity,” he added. “The charismatic movement has, in many ways, redefined both Catholic and Protestant Hispanics, creating a third category that blurs the lines of this historic divide. And it has even more personal implications: a person’s self-identification as charismatic is strongly correlated with how deeply she integrates faith with other aspects of her life.

“Hispanic Americans rightly take pride in their strong work ethic and in the contribution their work makes to the country as a whole. In some ways, this ethic of hard work is more integrated with Hispanic identity than is religious persuasion, and it presents an opportunity to pastors and other faith leaders invested in discipleship among Latinos. Helping Hispanic Christians make the connection between their faith and their vocation — their calling — is a promising path toward sustainable faith formation.” (Barna)



“Hispanic Americans rightly take pride in their strong work ethic and in the contribution their work makes to the country as a whole. In some ways, this ethic of hard work is more integrated with Hispanic identity than is religious persuasion, and it presents an opportunity to pastors and other faith leaders invested in discipleship among Latinos. Helping Hispanic Christians make the connection between their faith and their vocation—their calling—is a promising path toward sustainable faith formation.”

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.

BIBB

▶ **Ashby Church, Brierfield**, will celebrate homecoming May 18, 10:30 a.m. Guest singers will be New Ground. Lunch will follow, and there will be additional singing in the afternoon. Everyone is welcome. ▶ **Schultz Creek Church, Centreville**, will hold a singing with The Waysiders quartet May 31, 6–8 p.m. Ben Corley is pastor.

BIRMINGHAM

▶ The Woman's Missionary Union of **Westmont Church, Minor**, is organizing an evangelistic block party that will be held at Westmont Church to reach out to the community. The block party will be May 31, 10 a.m.–1 p.m. The church is partnering with Open Door Church, Minor. There will be free food (hot dogs, nachos, popcorn and cotton candy) served from the Birmingham Association feeding unit, water activities for the children (a large Slip 'n Slide and face painting) and door prizes. In addition, Billy Smith and his band from First Church, Pleasant Grove, will perform and the Minor Fire Department will be there with Sparky the robotic dog. For information call the church office at 205-788-6811. Nathan Daniels is pastor.

COOSA RIVER

▶ **Bon Air Church, Sylacauga**, will celebrate homecoming May 25. The service will begin at 10 a.m. with the Sweeney Family Singers from Meridian, Miss. Former pastor Walter Coleman will speak following the special singing. A covered dish lunch will follow the service. Jeff Thomas is pastor.

ETOWAH

▶ **Union 3 Church, Gadsden**, will host Wilburn & Wilburn and Steve Ladd in concert May 17, 6 p.m. Doors will open at 5 p.m. The concert will raise funds for church members traveling to Peru this summer for a missions trip. For tickets call 256-553-1358. Tickets also are available at People's Choice Bank in Hokes Bluff. Joey Hanner is pastor.

MADISON

▶ **David Hull**, pastor of **First Church, Huntsville**, has announced his retirement from the church effective Aug. 10. He has served at the church since October 2002.

MONTGOMERY

▶ **Capitol Heights Church, Montgomery**, will celebrate its 80th anniversary May 18. The morning worship service will be-

gin at 10:30 a.m. A covered dish fellowship lunch will follow the morning worship service. All former members, former staff and friends of the church are invited to attend. J. Warren Culver is pastor.

SHELBY

▶ **Prospect Church, Westover**, will celebrate homecoming May 18, 10 a.m. Heavens Strings will present the music. Kevin Brasher is pastor.

WASHINGTON

▶ **Chapel Hill Church, Millry**, will celebrate homecoming May 18 with music at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m. Jennifer Wallely and her two daughters and Jacob Holston will be the featured singers. A business meeting will be at noon, and lunch will follow the meeting. For information call 251-846-2125. Grant Barber is interim pastor.

WEST CULLMAN

▶ **Jack Collins** will resign as director of missions (DOM) for **West Cullman Association** effective Oct. 21, which will coincide with the association's next annual meeting. He will not fully retire from ministry at that time but only resign as the association's DOM, a role he has held since October 1985.

ALABAMA UPDATES

PEOPLE, CHURCHES MAKING NEWS ACROSS THE STATE

Forest Lake Pastor Payne marks 25 years of service

Pastor Donald (Donnie) Payne, who marked 25 years of leadership May 5 at Forest Lake Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, said he has learned that God has never called him to do anything that He has not provided the resources to do it with.

During his tenure at the Tuscaloosa Baptist Association church, Payne has seen God lead the congregation to rebuild the church facilities after they were severely damaged in a tornado April 27, 2011. The church launched a disaster relief ministry to survivors that still serves about 200 families a week in different capacities. Later Forest Lake built Nehemiah's Coffeehouse to use as a tool in relational evangelism.



PAYNE

"God has blessed me with a long line of faithful leaders in the church that work tirelessly behind the scenes because they love God," Payne said of the congregation.

The church will recognize Payne's years of service with a celebration June 29.

Payne earned a bachelor's degree from Blue Mountain College in Mississippi and a master of divinity and a doctor of ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

He served as interim pastor of three churches early in his ministry and later as pastor of two churches in Mississippi before leading Forest Lake. He also served as Tuscaloosa Association moderator and in several other ministry roles related to family ministry in Alabama and Mississippi. He has led several missions trips throughout the United States and overseas, including Indonesia.

One of Payne's dreams will come to fruition in August 2014, he said, when the church will launch a New Orleans Seminary extension center in its building. "We see God using Forest Lake Baptist Church as a [way] to reach young people with the gospel, giving them a platform for ministry experiences, providing them with the training needed and then sending them out to plant churches," Payne said.

He and his wife, Charlotte, have two children and four grandchildren. (Neisha Fuson)

Pastor St. John celebrates 50 years in ministry

On April 12, 50 years to the day that Ted St. John began his ministry, members of Providence Baptist Church, Ragland, surprised their pastor with a reception celebrating the accomplishment.

An estimated 100 people attended the reception, and a representative from each of the churches St. John has served spoke at the event.

St. John has been pastor of Providence Baptist in St. Clair Baptist Association for five years.

Among the churches he served previously are Mount Moriah Baptist Church, Pleasant Valley Baptist Church and Evening Star Baptist Church, all in Pell City and all in St. Clair Association. St. John served at Evening Star twice for a total of 19 years. At one time, he was interim pastor of Macedonia #2 Baptist Church, Ragland.

St. John said one of his ministry highlights was baptizing someone who was 83 years old. Another was when Evening Star gave him a trip to the Holy Land. He said he is thankful for the opportunities at the different churches of "just being with the people, sharing in their lives in the good times and bad."

Shad Smith — who has served as a pastor in Alabama and Tennessee — spearheaded the reception effort. Smith was the youth minister at Evening Star during St. John's second pastorate there.

"The Lord used him in my life to prepare me for the ministry," said Smith, who has been a pastor for 15 years.

Through all his pastorates, St. John has been bivocational. "That is what I was called to be," said St. John, who has no plans to retire. Though there were times when he was "stretched" by all the responsibilities, he said he does not regret being bivocational. He also said Jane, his wife of 44 years, has been an encourager and helper.

The St. Johns have one daughter and three grandchildren.

(Leigh Pritchett)



ST. JOHN



Photo courtesy of Eddie Holmes

Saraland's Celeste Road Baptist breaks ground

Celeste Road Baptist Church, Saraland, broke ground on its new facility April 27. The Mobile Baptist Association church was destroyed by an electrical fire Oct. 20, 2013. Since the fire the church has used two mobile chapel units provided by the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. In June, a team of 250–300 volunteers from the Baptist Church Builders of Texas will work to build the church. A second team from Tuskegee Lee Baptist Association will serve in July to complete the new facility. Pastor Eddie Holmes (far left) said the building process is 'real exciting' and that it should be completed by fall 2014. Others pictured (l to r): Hazel Wimpee, Burt Hart, Sarah Vanderford, Fred Hall, Jerry Willis and Thomas Wright, Mobile Association executive director of missions.

SUMMER meals

State education officials seek churches, community organizations to provide meals for kids during summer

By Carrie Brown McWhorter
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Kids across Alabama look forward to summer vacation, but for many, the break from school also means a break from regular meals. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides a way for churches and community organizations to fill in this gap and feed children who otherwise might go hungry.

In both rural and urban areas throughout Alabama, thousands of children live in low-income families. During the school year, these children are eligible for free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch through the National School Lunch Program, a program of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). When schools close in the summer, so does the school cafeteria, depriving some students of the only meals they receive each day.

Some 385,000 children in Alabama schools receive subsidized meals during the school year, and the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) would like to see more of them receive meals during the summer months, said Danielle Turk, an education specialist with ALSDE.

"The SFSP is one of the most underutilized federal programs in the country," Turk said. "All children in the state are eligible to receive these meals, but there has to be a site near them to provide the meals."

Alabama is making progress toward getting more partners in the program. In November 2013, the USDA recognized Alabama for increasing the number of summer meals served in 2013 to more than 1.6 million — an increase of 400,000 meals more than the previous summer.

In a press release announcing the recognition, ALSDE Child Nutrition Program Coordinator June Barrett expressed her pride in the growth of the program and the work of the sponsor sites throughout the state. "These organizations are to be commended for their efforts in eliminating childhood hunger in their communities," Barrett said.

However, there are still many students

who are not served, which is why the ALSDE is trying to get the word out to potential partner organizations. While many schools do serve as summer feeding sites, churches, recreation centers, parks and camps are eligible for the SFSP too, Turk said. These locations offer safe and familiar environments and are places where children already gather when school is out.

Churches are especially good partners for the SFSP because many already have summer programs in place, Turk said.

The SFSP will reimburse a sponsor site for two meals or a meal and a snack daily. The meal does not have to be complicated or even hot. Many sites offer a sack lunch, while others offer breakfast and a snack.

Kerry Payne, director of the Gadsden Parks and Recreation Department in Etowah County, said, "If it were not for the summer feeding program, some kids for sure might not get a nutritious meal daily."

Payne serves as the coordinator for 20 SFSP sponsor sites throughout the city of Gadsden, including sites at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Wills Creek Baptist Church, the YMCA and schools.

The program's flexibility makes it a good fit for different situations, Turk said. Any child 18 or younger can receive a meal at a feeding site, and there is no minimum number of children who must participate, though there are guidelines for the adult-to-child ratio at each site. Fee-based camps are not eligible for reimbursement, but any free program, including Vacation Bible School-type programs, may be eligible.

Turk said, "The sponsor site gets to pick the days, times and weeks it will provide meals. The church or organization just needs the staff or volunteers to make it happen and the creativity to reach children in the community."

For more information on how to become a 2014 SFSP sponsor or site, contact Alfredia Griffin at agriffin@alsde.edu or Danielle Turk at dturk@alsde.edu or call 334-242-8249.



Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

From Easter to Pentecost

Ascension Significance (Part 2 of 5)

By Jerry Batson, Th.D.
Special to The Alabama Baptist

As previously noted, Christ's ascension was the intermediate stage of His exaltation. The initial stage was His resurrection and the final stage was His enthronement. When Peter spoke before the Jewish Council in response to questioning by the high priest, he began with the fact of the resurrection, saying, "The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed" (Acts 5:30). From that, Peter moved straight to the enthronement, "God exalted Him at His right hand as Leader and Savior" (Acts 5:31). While Peter did not mention it, we know that the ascension was the connecting link between resurrection and enthronement, with all three stages together constituting Christ's exaltation.

In John 7:37-39 we read the account of Jesus seizing a high moment during the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles to issue a thirst-quenching invitation to all who would listen by telling them of living water. In recording that dramatic moment, John appended an inspired explanation about the living water, saying, "Now this He said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (v. 39). The descending of the Spirit awaited the ascending of Jesus. From His exalted position in heaven, Christ "poured out" the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33).

Convicting work

Jesus had earlier spoken to the disciples about the Spirit's coming and His work of convicting the world. On that occasion, He declared, "When He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). Then in highly concentrated statements, Jesus gave a brief elaboration on each aspect of that convicting work. Our attention is drawn to what He said about the Spirit's convicting concerning righteousness but referring to His ascension: "Concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see Me no longer" (John 16:10).

How does Christ's going to the Fa-

ther — His ascension — relate to righteousness? Let's start with the incarnation: the divine Son of God became fully human. Among other things, this allowed Him to suffer death. In His bodily resurrection, Jesus did not divest Himself of humanity. Rather He elevated it by expressing humanity in a resurrection body. His resurrection appearances to a variety of people were in that body. Forty days after the resurrection, in that body He was accompanied by human witnesses to the Mount of Olives. As they watched, He was caught up from their sight. He did not later reappear bodily. They saw Him no more. Why? Because He was accepted back into heaven, taking a full humanity into the Father's presence. That acceptance witnessed to His perfect righteousness. That people saw Him no more also witnesses to that acceptance.

Christ's righteousness

A portion of the Holy Spirit's work in the world is to convince people that there is a righteousness that God will accept into His heaven. Christ's is the only righteousness earth has seen that is fit for heaven. The ascension witnesses to that righteousness.

Do we desire heaven? Hopefully so. If so, we dare not trust our own versions of human righteousness. The best version we can muster is comparable to filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). The Holy Spirit seeks to help unrighteous people trust Jesus, who grants believers a heaven-bound, God-accepted righteousness. The ascension of Christ points us to the truth of the gift of righteousness. What do we do when offered a gift? We gratefully and graciously accept it. 🙏

Jerry Batson, retired associate dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and professor at several schools of religion, is pastor of First Baptist Church, McCalla.



'Super dedicated'

Volunteers thank God for giving them opportunities

(continued from page 1)

relief coordinator for Madison Baptist Association.

A team of 10 volunteers from St. Clair Baptist Association also served in Limestone County. "Our team is made of chain saws, a skid steer and a bucket truck," said Glenn Pender, St. Clair Association disaster relief coordinator. "In fact, we might be the only association in the state with a bucket truck."

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief teams from the following associations also are helping with the relief efforts in Limestone County: East Cullman, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan, Tennessee River and West Cullman.

In North Jefferson County an EF1 tornado destroyed Kimberly Fire Department and damaged multiple other buildings in a matter of just nine minutes. With speeds reaching up to 100 mph and a width of nearly 800 yards, the tornado was able to send parts of the fire department building across the road. Several firefighters were seeking shelter when the tornado hit, but there were no injuries. Kimberly Church of God also encountered severe damage as did North Jefferson Middle School, a vacant retail building and multiple homes in the Doss Ferry subdivision.

Sherrell White, disaster relief coordinator for Chilton Baptist Association, enlisted a team of nine volunteers to help in Kimberly, including chain saw cutters and heavy equipment operators.

Joe Mims, a "blue cap" for one of the specific disaster relief ministries from Chilton Association, bragged on the volunteers. "Many of them are older and have physical problems, but they want to serve. They are super dedicated to disaster relief."

In the towns of Adamsville and Graysville in North Jefferson County an EF2 tornado with a path more than 5 miles long and 1,500 yards wide left considerable property damage.

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief teams from Birmingham, Chilton and Shelby Baptist associations joined the relief efforts in Adamsville and Graysville. Enon Baptist Church, Morris, in North Jefferson Baptist Association, hosted the teams.

As always, Alabama's disaster relief volunteers have served cheerfully. Gerald Garrett, disaster relief team leader from Shelby Association, told of a special prayer time his team had one morning. "In our morning devotional with the team we prayed for victims and also thanked God for giving us the opportunity to help people."

In Bessemer, Larry Harris, Bessemer Baptist Association disaster relief coordinator, enlisted seven chain saw operators to help remove trees from driveways and from the tops of homes. "We have worked mostly in the neighborhoods behind UAB West Hospital," Harris said.

But May 1, damage assessment showed the Bessemer destruction to

be worse than first thought. Additional disaster relief teams from Bethel and Selma Baptist associations have been sent to Bessemer.

In other parts of Alabama, disaster relief volunteers from Franklin and Colbert Lauderdale Baptist associations did chain saw and cleanup work in Russellville. "The people we helped appreciated our ministry," said Billy Entekin, Franklin Baptist Association disaster relief coordinator.

A tornado left a trail of destruction in Blount (See 'Chaplains,' page 13)



Photo by Doug Rogers

Disaster relief strategist Mel Johnson (left) and executive director Rick Lance (right), of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, pray with Pastor Wayne White of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Sardis.

Looking for new customers?

200,000+ weekly readers!



FOR ADVERTISING INFORMATION, CONTACT BILL GILMORE:
205-870-4720, ext. 107 • 1-800-803-5201, ext. 107 (toll-free)
bgilmore@thealabamabaptist.org

in Loving Memory

of Alabama Baptist leaders, friends



Jacob (Jake) S. Phillips

Former Alabama Baptist pastor, DOM dies

Jacob (Jake) S. Phillips, a former Alabama Baptist pastor and director of missions (DOM) for both Covington and Conecuh Baptist associations, died April 25. He was 94.

A native of Granite Falls, N.C., Phillips served in the U.S. Army in World War II as an automatic rifleman with the 114th Infantry, Company F, from Sept. 1, 1944, to April 19, 1946. He was awarded the American Theater Service Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign (EAME) Service Medal with two bronze service stars and a World War II victory medal.

Phillips served as associate pastor for Southside Baptist Church, Monroeville, early in his ministry. From 1960 to 1964, he served as DOM for Conecuh Association. He then served as DOM for Covington Association from 1964 to 1984 and, during his tenure, was elected president of the Alabama Baptist Conference of Directors of Missions. At one point during his years as a member of West Highland Baptist Church, Andalusia, from 1964 to 1995, he also served that church as interim pastor.

Phillips resigned as DOM of Covington Association in June 1984 to retire, but he continued to do interim work in Alabama. He moved to Florida in 1995 where he also did interim work and taught the men's Bible class at First Baptist Church, Madison, Fla.

He was preceded in death by his first wife of 57 years, Edna.

He is survived by his wife of 14 years, Judy; one daughter; two stepsons; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. (TAB)



PHILLIPS

Benefit GALA

Two Pianos, Eight Hands

with The Davis Piano Quartet

PRESENTED BY
HOMWOOD ROTARY'S EDUCATION FOUNDATION

SUNDAY
MAY 25 3 p.m.

Samford University
Brock Recital Hall
800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35229



GENERAL ADMISSION: \$35
PATRON ADMISSION: \$50

Includes reserved seating.

Sponsorship posted in the program and post publications.

Discounts offered to groups of 5 or more.

TO PURCHASE TICKETS:

Call Joshua Carnes at 205-414-2171
or visit <http://tinyurl.com/HomewoodRotaryConcert>.

Tickets also available at the door or from any Homewood Rotarian. All ticket prices are tax-deductible.

A Certain Trumpet

Sermons by Alabama Baptists

The Ten Commandments — Fifth in a series

Honoring your father and your mother

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex. 20:12).

Charles Spurgeon is often quoted saying, "When home is ruled according to God's Word, angels might be asked to stay with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element."

Do angels find themselves at home when in our presence, or are they appalled by the lack of honor being demonstrated in today's family? Do you ever stop and wonder why God put honoring your parents on his Top 10 list? Could it be that God is trying to show us a fundamental truth that is necessary for healthy relationships in the home? Can we turn to the Scriptures to see a model of honor that reflects the heart of this fifth commandment?

What does it mean to honor your parents?

'To give weight to'

The Hebrew word for "honor" means "to give weight to" or "to be heavy." To honor someone is to place a high value on them, to hold them in high esteem, to treat them with a ton of respect. We do so because God has established authority in every realm of life — in government, in the church and especially in the family.

I have heard it said many times, "Every moment is a teachable moment." In "Where is Moses When We Need Him," authors Bill and Kathy Peel remind parents to teach their children the values that matter most. Their insights apply to both first-time and long-time parents. Their premise: "What we leave in our children is far more important than what we leave to them" (p. 20). We are to leave a legacy of honor by obedience and respect.

Teach your children to honor you. Help them understand that a life of obedience leads to a long and happy life. Let them see you give honor and respect.

My wife and I are blessed to have parents who love the Lord and who love each other. They have taught us the value of honor and respect. My parents have been married for 57 years. My in-laws have been married for 52 years. We are so thankful to have these



By Derek L. Staples

Derek L. Staples is lead pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, and serves on the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions' executive committee. He and his wife, Julie, have three sons.

role models before our sons. They are indeed worthy of a ton of respect.

Why honor your parents?

Most divide the commandments into two categories, the first four being our duty to God with the last six our duty to our fellow man. Pastor and author Alistair Begg divides the commandments five and five, thereby placing the honoring of parents under duty to God. He then adds, "This makes sense. How could we ever claim to honor God, whom we have not seen, if we fail to honor our parents, whom we do see?" (p. 119).

God says to honor your parents "that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you" (Ex. 20:12). Moses repeats this command in an Old Testament parallel passage (Deut. 5:16). He says we are to honor our parents so that "it may go well with you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you."

Paul reminds the church at Ephesus and Colossae of the fifth commandment. To the Ephesians he says to honor them because "this is right" (Eph. 6:1), and to the Colossians he says honoring parents "pleases the Lord" (Col. 3:20). Although we may no longer be directly under parental authority, we never outgrow God's command to honor our parents. The benefits are long-lasting. From these texts we find the immense value of honoring our parents:

- ▶ It adds longevity to your life.
- ▶ It brings pleasure to your life.
- ▶ It is the right thing to do.
- ▶ It pleases the Lord.

How do you honor your parents?

How can a son ever give back the kind of sacrificial love his parents so graciously poured out to him over the years? In my family, how do I express honor to two selfless people who sacrificed so much for

their five children? A few years ago I sat in a hospital room with my mom after she had suffered a stroke and, in the middle of the night, I began thinking about this commandment. Here are some things I scribbled:

▶ I can share with my siblings the privilege of caring for my parents during the latter stages of their lives.

▶ I can honor my marriage the way my parents have honored theirs for 57 years.

▶ I can model for my children what honor looks like in the home. My boys will learn how to honor their parents by observing how my wife and I honor our parents. Remember: "We reap what we sow."

▶ I can teach the principle of honor in the home to my church family.

These are just a few of the ways I can honor my parents. What about you? What are you doing today to express honor to your parents?

Who is your role model when it comes to honor?

Our model for parental honor and respect is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He submitted to both His earthly parents (Luke 2:51) and His heavenly Father (Matt. 26:39). Jesus best exemplifies what is meant by parental honor through His life, death and resurrection. From the time of His birth to the time of His death Jesus had this one thing in mind: to please and honor His heavenly Father and perfectly perform the task that the Father had sent Him to do (John 4:34; 8:29). In this we see that parental honor is firmly rooted in the message of the gospel.

Perfect obedience

Jesus Christ, the eternal second person of the Trinity, entered His creation wrought with decay and death thanks to our rebellious sin. He lived the life we could not (perfect obedience) and died in our stead (your place and mine), all in complete obedience to His heavenly Father. Therefore one cannot fully comprehend the gravity of this fifth commandment without first seeing the imperative of obedience that is woven throughout the life of Christ and His redemptive gospel. It is only when I bow in brokenness and submission to Christ's lordship that I fully understand and appreciate what is meant by "honoring your parents." ❏

Baptist influence

Halt to casino credited to Kentucky Baptists

Major secular newspapers have run stories in recent weeks focusing on why a proposal to legalize casino gambling didn't make it out of Kentucky's General Assembly again this year. They appeared to conclude that strong Baptist influence in Frankfort doomed the idea.

USA Today, the *Courier-Journal of Louisville* and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* reported that Baptists make up more than 1 million of Kentucky's 4.4 million population, and that almost half the state Senate and more than one-third of the House identify as Baptists.

Baptists have long opposed casinos, saying they prey on human weakness for profit and that they would especially hurt Kentucky's poor who might be lured into losing the little money they have in hopes of a big payoff.

Key leadership

The newspapers reported that Baptists hold an abundance of key leadership positions in both the House and Senate, including Sen. Sara Beth Gregory who is chairwoman of the Senate Enrollment Committee. Baptists in leadership positions have had a noticeable impact on what gets through the state Legislature.

The newspapers credited Baptist influence with passage of Kentucky's ban on gay "marriage" in 2004, as well as Gov. Steve Beshear's inability to get legislative approval for a constitutional amendment on gambling that he's been pushing hard for the past six years.

Beshear has pushed casino legislation every year since he became governor in 2007.

Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood has played a lead role in opposing casinos.

Chitwood's offensive strategy this year included advertising on Christian radio stations, devoting time to secular talk radio and communicating directly with the Kentucky Convention's 750,000 members about the gambling issue through a video sent to Baptist churches across the state.

All other religious groups, including Catholics, are eclipsed by Baptists in the General Assembly, according to a directory compiled by the Legislative Research Commission that includes the religious affiliations of state lawmakers.

Chitwood said, "The numbers aren't surprising, considering Kentucky is home to more than a million Southern Baptists and a larger number of other Baptist groups. That's a powerful voting bloc that has the capability to change the face of politics in the state."

He added, "Holding so many leadership positions gives Baptists incredible sway inside the Capitol." (BP)

"And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle?" 1 Cor. 14:8

The Bible study group at Jefferson State Community College meets during lunchtime on the Pell City campus.

'Sense of community'

St. Clair Association helps start Bible study at Jefferson State Community College

By Anna Keller
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

When Jefferson State Community College opened a campus in Pell City in 2006, members of St. Clair Baptist Association started brainstorming ways they could minister at the school. But they kept hitting dead ends, said Ben Chandler, who serves as St. Clair Association's director of missions.

"Most students are commuters, so there was no dorm, and nothing seemed to transpire as far as a ministry," he said. "We kept praying, and one day I came into my office and opened my email and there was an email from a Jeff State professor who wondered if the association would be involved as she got a Bible study started at the school."

That professor was Christina Dick, who started teaching art at the college in 2011. She was in-

spired to get a Bible study started after realizing the school was ripe with missions opportunities. So when her pastor led a session on spiritual gifts in fall 2013, she felt it was time to act on getting a ministry put in place at Jefferson State.

"In art there's a lot of opportunity to talk about religious things, and I quickly learned that students didn't know Bible stories — big things like David and Goliath and Noah," she said. "My classes were turning into Sunday School classes. This was a missions field, but I didn't know what to do with it."

Dick's pastor connected her with Chandler, and together the two began putting plans in place for a Bible study at the school.

As Chandler and Dick were working to launch the study, freshman Spanish education major Anna Arrington was searching for a similar outlet.

"I visited some friends at Auburn, and they were talking about how awesome their campus



Photo by Christina Dick

ministry was," Arrington said. "I wondered why we couldn't have that at Jeff State, and when I asked the campus director I was given a sheet to fill out like you would when you wanted to start a club."

Arrington was connected to Dick and Chandler, and she became the study's student ambassador.

Getting the word out

To publicize the Bible study to the student population, the group hosted a breakfast in January at the start of the spring semester, giving out food as well as information about the Bible study. That, along with word-of-mouth, helped to gather a strong group for the study's first semester — with 12 to 20 attending any given week. The group met during lunchtime, and meals were provided by Woman's Missionary Union groups from nearby churches. The group studied the book "Chase the Lion" by Mark Batterson.

Arrington said group members became close and already have plans for service projects and a fall retreat.

"At community college, you lack the community you get from living on campus at a university," she said. "It's given us a sense of community, and it's encouraging to know there are other believers at the school trying to serve Christ where they are. We can help each other and have people who provide a way to do that."

The second semester of the ministry will kick off May 27 with the summer semester. ☩

— Correction —

In the article "FBC Foley helps support NYC church plant" in the May 1 issue, it states that Connection Church was planted about nine years ago. However, it was actually planted about one and a half years ago.

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: Union Baptist Church in Honorville is prayerfully seeking a pastor. Full-time and bivocational resumes accepted. Please send to: ATTN: Search Committee, P.O. Box 158, Honorville, AL 36042.

PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER: Eastside Baptist, Birmingham, Ala., is seeking a minister of music to plan and lead worship/music ministry. Blended service. Email resumé to: jellison@EBCBirmingham.org.

PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER: Meek Baptist Church in Arley, Ala., is seeking a godly man to lead our choir and congregation in blended style worship. Email resumé: meekbaptist@att.net. www.meekbc.com.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF STUDENTS & FAMILY MINISTRIES: First Baptist Church of Mt. Olive, Mt. Olive, Ala., 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: Eastside Baptist Church has an opening for a part-time youth minister. Job will be 20 hours a week maximum. Email resumé to: info@EBCBirmingham.org.

CHILDREN'S PASTOR: First Baptist Church of the Islands in Savannah, Ga., is seeking a full-time children's pastor. This person will lead the children's ministry (kindergarten–5th grade) in a growing, contemporary church setting, which averages 575 people in overall

worship attendance. The ideal candidate has a sense of God's specific call to reach and minister to grade school-aged children. Strong personal skills in relating to children and families will be expected. Desire to invest life and time in the lives of children is also expected. Ability to oversee a variety of facets of children's ministry is a must. The current children's ministry impacts over 150 children weekly in a variety of ministry settings (Sunday School, worship, AWANA) and utilizes 75 volunteer leaders with potential for incredible growth. Please send resumes with cover letter and references to: kidlife@fbcislands.com or to: Search Team, FBC Islands, 6613 Johnny Mercer Boulevard, Savannah, GA 31410.

OTHER POSITIONS

COUNSELORS: Pathways Professional Counseling, a ministry of the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes, has openings for full-time counselors in these locations: Birmingham, Dothan/Andalusia and Muscle Shoals/Athens/Decatur. Travel between offices in required for all openings. Must have a master's degree (CACREP accredited/equivalent program) or higher, be a LPC or have an equivalent in allied mental health field. ALCs or the ability to be licensed in Alabama will be considered. Contact Ross Hickman, 205-945-0037 or rhhickman@abchome.org. Visit our website: www.pathwaysprofessional.org.

SALES: Murphy Robes seeks a part-time, commissioned-only sales professional. Perfect salary augmentation for choir directors with networking skills. No limit on how much you can make. Fax resumé to 727-873-0873.

BUSINESS

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.

ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTION: egive-usa.com — Good stewardship made easy. Please call or email us for a free brochure. 1-866-303-6623 or brad@egive-usa.com.

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.

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.

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

STEEPLES, ETC.: No job too big or too small. Call for free on-site consultation. Toll-free 1-888-699-9679 or

Alabama local 205-699-9679. Ask for Terry Barnes, owner. Visit gallery at www.SteeplesEtc.com.

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

CANADIAN ISLANDS TRIP: June 15–25. Trip includes 19 meals, motor coach and hotel. Tour Montreal, Quebec and Ontario also whale watching. Hershey Chocolate World, Penn., on return. Leave from Gadsden. Call Doris, 256-492-3465.

AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE VACATION CONDOS: Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, Ala. Rent direct. Christian family owners. Lowest prices on the beach. Call 205-556-0368, 205-752-1231, 251-752-2366 or www.gulfshorescondos.com.

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

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.

Want to know God?

Pastor Zac Reno
First Baptist Church, Arley

Do I know God? Is God present in my life in a real way? These are very important questions.

Recently I met with a man who had been raised in a church-going family and was fairly well-read concerning Scripture and spiritual things. However, some hard situations in his life began to move him to question if he truly knew God. He remembered from previous experiences how many godly people around him were able to gain strength, encouragement and perspective through their relationships with God during their hardships, but when faced with the need to do that himself he was at a loss. By the end of our conversation, this man had joyously entered into a relationship with God.

I was able to share with this man that he was not alone in not knowing God. In fact, the Bible tells us in Ephesians 2:12 that to be a man without Christ is to be a man without God in this world.

The reason why you must know Christ in order to know God is because Christ's death on the cross was God's means of taking the sin of the world away. It is because of sin that humanity is separated from God. Paul said in Romans 3:23, "for all have sinned and fallen short of God's glorious standard." Falling short of God's standard means we have willingly sinned and gone against the purposes and commands given to us by God our Creator. It is this sin that separates us from God and knowing God. However, in 1 Peter 3:18, Peter said, "For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God."

Christ died to take away our sins and to pave a way that we might know God in a real way. The relationship with God that Christ made available on the cross is a free gift.

You can know God today. Right where you are you can call out to Him to save you. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, turn from sin and turn to Christ. Jesus said in John 17:3, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

Baptist NEWS BRIEFS

COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES

Mid-Continent University closing after 65 years

MAYFIELD, Ky. — A Kentucky college with strong Southern Baptist ties will close its doors by June 30, citing a “myriad of circumstances” as the cause of its closure.

Trustees of Mid-Continent University near Paducah, Ky., met for more than three hours April 15 before announcing their decision to close the school, which was organized by western Kentucky pastors in 1949 with the endorsement of the West Kentucky Baptist Association. Mid-Continent moved to Mayfield, its current location, in 1957.

In December 2013, Mid-Continent received a second consecutive year of accreditation warning from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), its regional accrediting body. Among Mid-Continent’s deficiencies was failure to comply with SACSCOC institutional effectiveness standards and failure to demonstrate financial stability, according to the SACSCOC website. Mid-Continent also failed to comply with SACSCOC standards regarding its participation in federal student aid programs, the SACSCOC website said.

The *Western Recorder* reported in February that Mid-Continent was filing paperwork in hopes that the Department of Education would release \$9 million in funding. While it waited for federal funds, Mid-Continent used between \$7 million and \$9 million of its reserve funds — a major expense relative to the university’s \$22 million budget.

Ethics professor, peace activist Stassen dies

PASADENA, Calif. — Glen Stassen, an evangelical peace activist who taught Christian ethics for more than 50 years, died April 26, months after being diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer.

Stassen, 78, an author and the Lewis B. Smedes Professor of Christian Ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., pioneered the “just peacemaking” theory, recognized internationally as an alternative to both pacifism and “just war.”

Stassen taught at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., from 1976 to 1996. In 1979 he helped organize a meeting at Deer Park Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., joining a group in the church that had been meeting to discuss and pray about the need for a greater peace witness in the Southern Baptist Convention. They were joined by an American Baptist peacemaking group started by pacifists in the early days of World War II that expanded influence during the Cold War-era to nonpacifists concerned about the threat of nuclear war.

The dialogue led a year later to the launch of the *Baptist Peacemaker*, a magazine edited by Glenn Hinson and Carmen Sharp, and another gathering at Deer Park Baptist in 1984, which formed and organized the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Churches in Turkey form Baptist alliance

IZMIR, Turkey — Four Baptist congregations have formed the Alliance of Baptist Churches in Turkey.

The goals of the group include encouraging member churches, explaining the teachings of Baptists to member churches and to others and developing Baptist leaders.

Ertan Çevik, pastor of Izmir Baptist Church, was elected president and Orhan Pıçaklar, pastor of Samsun Agape Church, was named general secretary. Each will serve an initial term of five years.

Turkey has a deep Christian heritage that goes back to the early Church, but Christians are now a minority. It is estimated that there are approximately 120,000 Christians in Turkey out of a population of more than 76 million. Sunni Islam is the majority religion.

The founding of the Alliance of Baptist Churches in Turkey occurs just months before the Baptist World Alliance begins its annual gathering in Izmir in early July. Izmir is biblical Smyrna mentioned in the Book of Revelation. The annual gathering includes a tour of the ruins of Ephesus, an important biblical city of the early Church.



Photo courtesy of Frances Pugh

Christine Ponder, a member of FBC Robertsedale, reads the day’s prayer calendar during the 100th anniversary celebration of Baldwin Baptist Association’s WMU at FBC Foley on April 26.

‘Going, giving & serving’

Baldwin Association’s WMU marks 100 years

By Bruce Sims
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

With traditional Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU)-style pomp and circumstance, complete with a parade of flags, Baldwin Baptist Association’s WMU celebrated its 100th anniversary April 26.

About 175 people gathered at First Baptist Church, Foley, for a mid-morning tea and program.

Along with the reading of the day’s prayer calendar by Christine Ponder, a member of First Baptist Church, Robertsedale, Baldwin Association WMU director Susan Bartholomew also shared with the group.

Bartholomew said, “Going, giving and serving is the motto for WMU. In our 100-year history our association has had only 12 directors. This speaks volumes about the commitment of you ladies as you attend the meetings to pray for our missionaries, teach GAs (Girls in Action) and RAs (Royal Ambassadors) as well as sponsor various offerings within the church, such as Lottie Moon at Christmas and Annie Armstrong at Easter.”

Seven of the eight living directors were present for the anniversary celebration.

Along with noting various historical facts about WMU, Bartholomew also mentioned fun facts about Baldwin County.

For instance, Baldwin County is larger than the state of Rhode Island, she said. And the only place mail is delivered by water in the United States is along the Magnolia Springs River Route. Two Baptist churches with strong WMU groups, Magnolia Springs Baptist and Vernant Park Baptist in Foley, can be found near its shores, she added.

The event also included music by Charis, a trio from First Baptist Church, Fairhope — Dee Pace,

Lauren Davis and Sharon Pippin — and the announcement of the 2014 Annie Rhodes Memorial Scholarship Fund winners.

Baldwin Association WMU has given scholarship money to girls attending Judson College in Marion, Samford University in Birmingham and the University of Mobile (UMobile) since 1972. More than \$80,000 in scholarship money has been given away through the years. The scholarship fund is named in memory of Baldwin Association’s first WMU director.

Kay Stewart, a member of New Life Baptist Church, Bay Minette, and a member of the Alabama WMU board of trustees, announced the 2014 recipients. They are: Ashley Jones, a member of Durant Chapel Baptist Church, Bay Minette, who will attend UMobile; Miranda Brown, a member of First, Robertsedale, who will attend Judson; Hannah Prestwood, also of First, Robertsedale, who will attend UMobile; and Justine Crotts, a member of 3Circle Baptist Church, Fairhope, who will attend UMobile.

‘Here I am Lord. Send me.’

Guest speaker for the event was Kim Hardy, an author and motivational speaker from Marietta, Ga. She focused on Romans 10:1–15 as she encouraged the WMU members to be available and open for ministry service.

“All it takes is the simple prayer of, ‘Here I am Lord. Send me.’ Believe me when I say that He will,” Hardy said. “It may be in ways we never thought of before, but His ways are what He meant in terms of our life’s purpose.”

“This is an opportunity to leave a legacy for not only your family but for the Lord as well,” she said. “Yes, it means stepping out on faith, and yes, it will be a challenge, but the Lord will guide you when you commit your talents to Him, and simply go forth and serve.”

Find us on
Facebook

The Alabama Baptist
newspaper.



Family MATTERS

MAY, 2014

from Generation to Generation : by Amy Hill

In the middle of a weary session of paper grading, God suddenly granted me a perspective of His blessings through generations. As I looked at a particular student's essay, the phrase "from generation to generation" from Luke 1:49-50 rang through my head over and over.

Mason Jones* was in my honors class. He had submitted the first of his required 8th grade essays, this one identifying who and why he admired certain adults in his life. This essay included a picture of a tall, red headed man in his mid-thirties playfully roughhousing with the sandy blonde, athletic Mason. There was not one trace of family resemblance between the two, but the look of family love and belonging was clearly in the picture.

I had met the red headed, middle aged man in the picture for the first time many years ago when he too sat in my 8th grade English classroom. David Lang* had been a real handful, with a bravado that sometimes came from sheer desperation. Being David's Sunday School teacher and English teacher, over time he began to share with me details about his life. I realized that David's bravado and sheer desperation stemmed from the fact that he had been removed from his birth parents by a judge due to difficult family situations and was placed with the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries (ABCH).

For years, David tested everyone who came into contact with him to see who really would stick by him. His social worker, the campus director, his youth workers at the local church, his Sunday School teachers, his football coach, and even his school teachers worked together to help show this young man that he was a loved child of God with tremendous capabilities. However, the real heroes in his life were his house parents, the Andersons.

Tammy and Jason Anderson not only bore the brunt of his rebellion and pain, but they chose to love him in his rebellion in the same way that God chose to love us before we loved him. David ever so slowly became a campus success story: he was saved and baptized in our local church, and he graduated from high school. He became a respectable, hardworking young man, and we proudly sent him off to college, eventually settling into a respectable job.

While reading Mason's essay, I realized that David's lessons had been learned and replicated. Mason wrote, "Most people will probably write about a professional athlete or their dad, but I admire David Lang most because he chooses to love me even though he doesn't have to. He married my mom and he isn't my real dad, but he is the best dad I can imagine."

As Mother's Day and Father's Day approaches, I am reminded that our work as parents has implications over many generations. Our house parents at the ABCH change the world for generations to come. Their modelling of mercy and grace is for this generation and those that follow. If the Andersons hadn't modeled the choice to love children who weren't theirs biologically, where would Mason Jones be today?

Possibly without the best dad he can imagine who is making the choice to love him.

*Names have been changed to protect identities.

Because the Andersons chose to love David despite him not being their biological child, today Mason is able to experience that same fatherly love. God used the Andersons, social workers, and counselors to show him love through hard times, but it would not have been possible

without the support of individuals and partner churches. Here are three ways you can continue to make a lasting impact for the children and families in our care and for the generations to come:

1 PRAY
Pray for the children and families in our care, as well as the foster parents, house parents, and social workers directly caring for them.

2 GIVE
Your donation will help provide hope and wholeness through services to protect, nurture, and restore the children and families in our care in the name of Christ. Visit www.alabamachild.org or call (205) 982-1112 to learn more about giving.

3 PROVIDE
Have your church or Sunday School class host a drive to collect items such as diapers, pantry items, and more for the children and families in our care. Visit www.alabamachild.org or call (205) 981-1112 to check out the needs list in your area.

“ He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. ” Luke 1:49-50



Alabama Baptist
CHILDREN'S HOMES
& Family Ministries

P.O. Box 361767
Birmingham, AL 35236-1767 Telephone: (205) 982-1112
Toll Free: (888) 720-8805

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

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

RELIGION in America

Compiled from Wire Services



Congress plants 'Anne Frank' sapling at US Capitol

WASHINGTON — For Holocaust diarist Anne Frank, who hid from the Nazis in an Amsterdam attic, hope came in the form of a white horse chestnut tree growing outside her window.

Now a 3-foot sapling grown from that same tree graces the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol, a symbol, lawmakers said, of the young girl's abiding faith in humanity. The Jewish teenager wrote about the tree and the joy she took from it three times in her diary, which is perhaps the world's best-known piece of Holocaust literature.

"May this tree grow to its full height, serene and bursting with life, planted in our nation's capital," said House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., at an April 30 ceremony.

In 2010, weakened by disease, the original tree fell in a windstorm. But the Anne Frank House, which preserves her family's hideout as a museum, had harvested chestnuts from the tree and sprouted them into saplings, offshoots of Frank's tree to be planted around the world. The sapling on the Capitol's West Lawn was the sixth to be planted.

Religious freedom offenders not updated, USCIRF says

WASHINGTON — Secretary of State John Kerry should cite 16 countries for severe violations of religious freedom, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommended April 30 in its 15th annual report.

"The past 10 years have seen a worsening of the already-poor religious freedom environment in Pakistan, a continued dearth of religious freedom in Turkmenistan, backsliding in Vietnam, rising violations in Egypt before and after the Arab Spring and Syria's descent into a sectarian civil war with all sides perpetrating egregious religious freedom violations. Yet no new countries have been added to the State Department's CPC (Countries of Particular Concern) list," the report states.

USCIRF recommended that the CPC list be expanded to include these countries along with Iraq, Nigeria and Tajikistan. USCIRF's 2013 report made similar recommendations, with the noteworthy addition in 2014 of Syria.

"Syria ... represents one of the worst situations in the world for religious freedom," USCIRF chair Robert P. George said.

Chaplains pray with, encourage, share gospel with disaster survivors

(continued from page 8)

County, and the Highland Lake Community of Oneonta also had significant damage. Disaster relief volunteers from Blount and St. Clair associations assisted with relief efforts.

Disaster relief volunteers from Walker Baptist Association did chain saw work in the Boldo community, according to Charles Sanders, District 9 disaster relief coordinator.

At press time, disaster relief officials were assessing damage and needs in Tuscaloosa.

Trained chaplains accompany all Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief teams.

"Alabama's disaster relief chaplains pray with and encourage disaster victims, give them emotional support, and most importantly, share the gospel," said Mark Wakefield, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM) chaplaincy strategist.

Newly trained chaplain Sonya Hayes, a member of Southside Baptist Church, Decatur, in Morgan Association, served for the first time alongside a chain saw team in Limestone County. "I went with excitement because I have a strong desire to minister to people. But I also went with some apprehension because I wanted to remember my training," she said.

Chris Gwinn, a disaster relief chaplain and pastor of First Baptist Church, Crossville, in DeKalb Baptist Association, understands the emotional demands faced by

Baldwin County hit with flooding

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers have responded to another need — flooding in Baldwin County.

On April 29, torrential rains brought historic flooding to coastal areas of Alabama and the Florida Panhandle. Between 6 and 10 p.m., more than 26 inches of rain fell in some places, leaving homes flooded with as much as 6 feet of water inside.

In Baldwin County, homeowners near the Fish River were evacuated by helicopters, jet skis, boats and firefighters.

On May 1, a team of 12 Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers assisted flood victims in Foley, according to Bill Stephens who was temporarily coordinating the relief effort for Baldwin Baptist Association.

"Some of the homes in Foley have more than 2 feet of water standing in them. Only a few of the affected homeowners had flood insurance," Stephens said.

Severe damage

Mel Johnson, disaster relief strategist for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, explained that steps are being taken to deploy more disaster relief teams to Baldwin County.

"Initial assessment damage is so severe that we will be engaged with relief support for months to come," Johnson explained.

To keep up with needs and volunteer opportunities in all areas of the state or to donate, visit www.sbdr.org. (TAB)

disaster relief chaplains. "You go and go and go, ministering all out to people, and then you hit a wall emotionally. You have to take a break."

Call to prayer

Mel Johnson, SBOM disaster relief strategist, has issued a call to prayer to all Alabama Baptists.

"Pray for families who have lost loved ones and belongings. Pray for emergency personnel.

And pray for our disaster relief volunteers," Johnson said.

Those wishing to aid by donating financially to the ongoing disaster relief ministry may send a check payable to Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, P.O. Box 11870, Montgomery, AL 36111-0870. Please note "Alabama Disaster Relief" on the check.

Donations also can be made online at www.sbdr.org. (Hannah Muñoz contributed)

AUTUMN **COLORS** FALL | Sept. 29 > Oct. 1 | 2014

18th ANNUAL **JUBILEE** CALL TODAY FOR A FREE BROCHURE!

GATLINBURG CONVENTION CENTER

3 DAYS/2 NIGHTS AS LOW AS \$129 PER PERSON → JUBILEECONFERENCES.COM

CALL 800-616-8863

Ricky Skaggs

JOHNNY HUNT

DR. CHARLES STANLEY

Jason Crabb

Gold City

THE KINGSMEN

DINO

LYNDA RANDLE

DENNIS SWANBERG

+ A SPECIAL KINGSGOLD REUNION

THE OLD TIME GOSPEL SINGIN' / LAUGHIN' / PREACHIN' CONFERENCE FOR MATURE & SENIOR ADULTS

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

Children's of Alabama CONCUSSION CLINIC
205.934.1041
www.ChildrensAL.org/concussion

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For May 11

Explore the Bible By Robert Olsen, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Christian Ministries, University of Mobile

TREASURE MOTHERS Proverbs 31:10-31

Proverbs 31 is written by King Lemuel, who is an unknown figure. His name does not appear in the lists of either the kings of Judah or Israel (the Northern tribes). There are several different views as to who this man is — some suggest it refers to King Solomon — but regardless, the Holy Spirit saw fit to put this proverb in the text of Holy Scripture, making it profitable for us and inspired.

Verses 10-31 deal with a biblical model for wives, but it is good advice for women at any stage in life, married or unmarried. In celebration of Mother's Day, it is good to remember why we are thankful for our mothers.

For Their Diligence (10-19)

The opening of this proverb recognizes the value of a capable wife. In some modern movies or books women are seen as "trophy" wives, where the husband married them for their looks or status. This is incredible foolishness because what is attractive about a woman is her commitment to the Lord. This is what a woman should strive to achieve and what men should desire. In these verses it also is evident that the woman is diligent and industrious. The woman should not expect to sit around all day and watch soap operas. Not only is there cooking, cleaning, ironing and mending clothes, but there also is taking care of the needs of the children. The idea that a housewife doesn't have a "job" is ridiculous. It is an incredibly difficult and necessary job. However, in modern America, it also is not uncommon to have a wife who works outside of the home. In either case, the main point is that in whatever task a woman finds herself — at home or in an office — she is to work diligently.

We need to remember to treasure our mothers and wives for their diligence in fulfilling their responsibilities.

For Their Compassion (20)

Even though a godly woman is busy ful-

filling her duties as a mother and/or wife, verse 20 indicates this does not lead to the exclusion of those in need. Martin Luther's wife, Katherine, was known for having to deal with the countless students and visitors that Martin Luther invited into his home. He was always willing to be hospitable to those in need, and his wife was the one who predominantly cared for their needs.

For Their Dedication to Family (21-29)

These verses show the benefits of a godly wife who has strength and character. Her dedication to her family is demonstrated by the fact that her kids are clothed (v. 21), her husband's reputation is enhanced (v. 23) and she gives wise instruction in the home. For those men who are married, these verses resonate. When I first had to get my kids dressed for school, I didn't even know the proper way a jumper was supposed to go on my daughters. Getting my kids' lunches ready is comprised of filling their lunch boxes with crackers and pretzels instead of a wholesome meal. It is easy to overlook the many ways a mother gets the children and the house prepared. For those who don't realize the amount of dedication this takes, just try to fulfill the duties of a mother for one day and you will be sure to appreciate the hard work and dedication it takes for a mother to help run the family.

For Their Devotion to the Lord (30-31)

The most important aspect about a woman is her devotion to the Lord. A woman who loves and fears the Lord is to be praised above all other women. Many people place an emphasis on how a woman looks, but eventually beauty fades. If a relationship is built upon looks, it will not last. You can see how prevalent this view is in America because one look at Hollywood reveals such ideas. Once an actress hits 40 it seems that they begin to have plastic surgery to try to retain their looks from their youth. How vain is it to maintain the appearance of youth. Instead godly women need to focus on their relationship with the Lord, as this is the true source of a woman's beauty.

Bible Studies for Life By Catherine Lawrence Department of Religion, Samford University

HOPE EXPRESSED Psalm 138:1-8

This week's lesson encourages Christians to express thanks to God for the hope we have in Christ. Psalm 138, a psalm of thanksgiving, offers believers an example of a grateful response to God's many blessings.

(1-3)

Here the psalmist expresses his wholehearted gratitude to the Lord for answering him on the day the psalmist called (v. 3). "On the day I called" refers to a time of crisis in the psalmist's life. To say the Lord "answered" him on the day he called is a way of stating that the Lord delivered the psalmist from that crisis. The exact nature of the psalmist's troubles is not specified, but his gratitude for the Lord's help is clear.

It seems the psalmist also recognized that the Lord helping him was an action consistent with the Lord's own character qualities. When the psalmist gave thanks for the Lord's "steadfast love" and "faithfulness" (v. 2), he highlighted two of the attributes God had proclaimed to be true of Himself in Exodus 34:6-7. These attributes emphasize God's loyalty toward His people, His ability and willingness to lend aid when a need arises and His trustworthiness. In essence, the psalmist saw his deliverance as a tangible demonstration of the Lord's steadfast love and faithfulness. He knew his hope was grounded in God Himself, and his expressions of gratitude reflect that knowledge. The psalmist reminds us that God extends Himself to us with help and hope and that He is worthy of our thanks and praise.

(4-6)

Verse 6 may reflect the psalmist's feeling about his own status ("lowly") in comparison with the Lord's ("high") and in light of what the Lord had done for him. The Lord is indeed "high" — a truth affirmed in the words "great is the glory of the Lord" (v. 5) and in the involvement of

"all the kings of the earth" in his praise (v. 4) — and yet He "regards the lowly." That the most-high God takes note of those who are lowly and acts on their behalf is reason for great hope. And gratitude is the appropriate response to all of the ways in which God takes note of us.

(7-8)

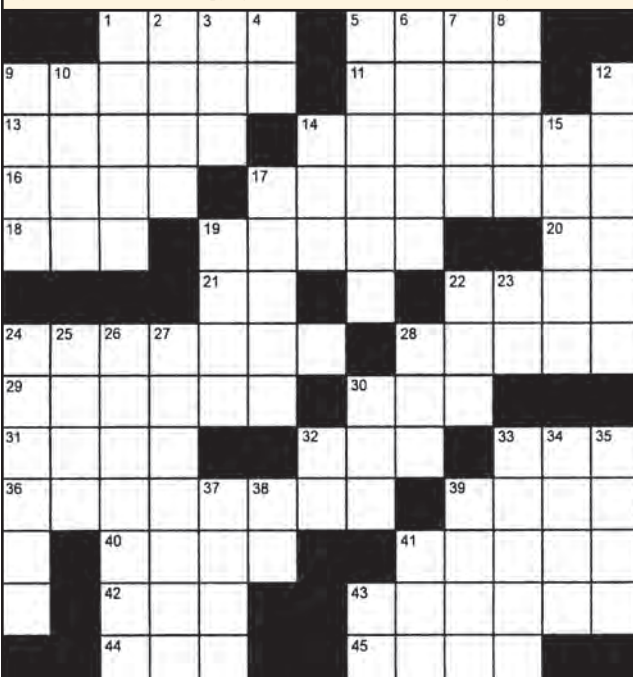
In verses 7-8 the psalmist continues his thanksgiving with an expression of trust in the Lord. Perhaps because of his experience of the Lord's deliverance described in verse 3, the psalmist now declares his deep conviction that the Lord will deliver him from any and all trouble he might face. That is, the psalmist knows he will continue to encounter any number of difficult or even dangerous circumstances over the course of time, but he trusts that God will deliver him. This deep trust in God's deliverance also produces a sense of hope for the future, for the psalmist is convinced that no matter the "trouble" he encounters, those troubles will not thwart the fulfillment of God's purpose for his life. It is as though the psalmist recognizes the enduring nature of God's presence with and commitment to him. Indeed the psalmist affirms that the Lord's steadfast love "endures forever" (v. 8).

In sum, Psalm 138 offers Christians a valuable reminder on two fronts.

One, the psalm reminds us that God works on behalf of His people, including those who find themselves "in the midst of trouble." We can find hope in our faithful God, and we certainly enjoy innumerable blessings that flow continually from His hand. Two, the psalm exemplifies a proper response to all that God is and all He has done for us. Like the psalmist, we may offer thanks to God with our whole hearts, for He has "blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing" (Eph. 1:3). And also with the psalmist, let us "give thanks to the Lord, for He is good" (Ps. 136:1). And let us be like the grateful leper who alone returned to thank Jesus for healing him (Luke 17:11-19).

Christian Crossword

By Janet W. Adkins Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



Across

- Lot sat in the ___ of Sodom. (Gen. 19:1)
- Son of Shem. (Gen. 10:22)
- Rehoboam sent ___ who was over the tribute. (1 Kings 12:18)
- Where the altar is in an Eastern Church.
- Person.
- Sick people ... taken with ___ diseases. (Matt. 4:24)
- Elder son of Zeus.
- Sanballat the ___. (Neh. 2:10)
- Name prefix (Simon ___ Jonah).
- Pertaining to an ecological sere.
- Newspaper person. (abbr.)
- British thanks.
- False god.
- Hide thyself by the brook ___. (1 Kings 17:3)
- ___ in Me, and I in you. (John 15:4)
- By the ___ of Babylon, there we sat down.

Down

- Fairy queen.
- He was. (Latin)
- Civil Aeronautics Authority.
- Put on strength, O ___ of the Lord. (Isa. 51:9)
- Let his habitation be ___. (Acts 1:20)
- Curved molding.
- Neighbor of Iraq.
- Snatches.
- Vertical take off. (abbr.)
- When Sanballat ... and ___ heard of it, it grieved them. (Neh. 2:10)
- A curvy shape.
- Norse god.
- Judah. (2 Kings 8:20)
- So be it.
- Seagoing prefix.
- And ___ told Jezebel all that Elijah had done. (1 Kings 19:1)
- He set it up in the plain of ___. (Dan. 3:1)
- It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a ___. (Matt. 19:24)
- In the borders of ___ on the west. (Josh. 11:2)
- Abraham ... offered him ... in the ___ of his son. (Gen. 22:13)
- Warmths.
- Mix.
- Business watchdog.
- The king of ___ they took alive. (Josh. 8:23)
- Give recognition.
- For the laborer is worthy of his ___. (Luke 10:7)
- Avoiding.
- Short answers.
- Motorists' club.
- Woman's name.
- Court. (abbr.)
- Once more.

- Slew the kings of Midian ... Zur ... Hur, and ___. (Num. 31:8)
- Network.
- Southeast Asian country.
- Is there any taste in the white of ___ egg? (Job 6:6)
- NASA prefix.
- In him is the love of ___ perfected. (1 John 2:5)
- ___ visit the fatherless and widows. (James 1:27)



TOP 10

downloaded songs from iTunes

CHRISTIAN & GOSPEL



1. Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)

By Hillsong UNITED
(Zion)



2. God's Not Dead

By Newsboys
(God's Not Dead — Like a Lion)



4. This Is Amazing Grace

By Phil Wickham
(The Ascension)



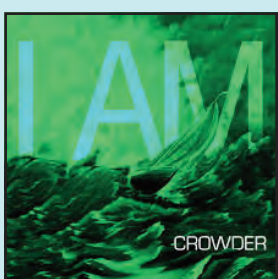
6. I Am

By Crowder
(Single)



5. Write Your Story

By Francesca Battistelli
(If We're Honest)



9. Do Something

By Matthew West
(Into the Light)

10. Shake

By MercyMe
(Welcome to the New)

Source: iTunes at press time



Photos courtesy of The Media Collective

Singer/songwriter Matt Redman remains committed to creating songs that help people express their praise, adoration, thanksgiving and devotion to God.

Praying through music

Songwriter connects worshippers around globe

By Leann Callaway
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

With millions of people singing his songs in churches and concerts each week, Matt Redman desires to connect worshippers to lyrics filled with messages of grace, redemption and forgiveness.

As the writer of praise songs such as “10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord),” “Better is One Day,” “You Never Let Go” and “Blessed Be Your Name,” Redman’s work has become a staple among contemporary worship. He currently has 26 songs in the Christian Copyright Licensing International Top 500, with six songs featured in the Top 50.

In addition to Redman’s songwriting making an impact on churches around the globe, fellow musicians also admire his heartfelt lyrics and melodies. Chris Tomlin, Michael W. Smith, David Crowder, Israel Houghton, Jeremy Camp, Jesus Culture and Passion are just a few of the artists who have selected songs written by Redman for their albums.

Redman has received countless awards and accolades, including two Grammy Awards and a Billboard Music Award for “Top Christian Song.”

Recently the song “10,000 Reasons” also was recognized as the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers’ Christian Music Song of the Year. At the 2013 Gospel Music Association Dove Awards in Nashville, Redman garnered six awards, including the prestigious honors of Songwriter of the Year, Song of the Year and Contemporary Christian Performance of the Year.

But in spite of his success and popularity, Redman remains focused on shining the spotlight on God.

“My main hope is that the songs will point to Jesus and help people pray to Him through music,” Redman said. “When I write worship songs, I often think about the two essential factors of description and devotion. I want to paint an inspiring picture of God through song and then give people a way to respond to what they see — bringing devotion to God.”

His newest worship album, “Your Grace Finds Me,” debuted at No. 1 on the Soundscan Christian Albums Chart and placed in the Top 30 on the Billboard 200.

“The title song is a celebration of the grace of God that shows up in so many different details of our daily lives, often when battle and blessing are happening alongside each other,” he said.

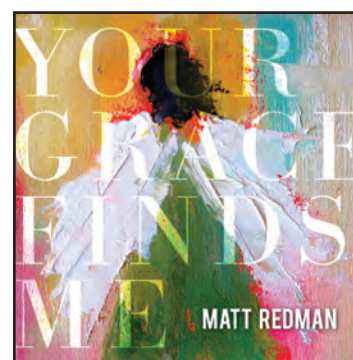
Redman said he feels a huge responsibility to bring people closer to God through songs.

“It never ceases to amaze me how music can carry truth into a person’s life in a key moment for them,” he noted. “Most recently, some of the more impacting stories have been about the song ‘10,000

Reasons.’ In fact, we’ve had people write to us and share that when their loved one passed away in the hospital, they requested to be listening to this song.

“That has to be one of the most encouraging things a songwriter could ever hear. What an awesome, humbling privilege to be a tiny part of ... that moment as their loved one went to be with Jesus.”

He added, “As I travel around the world and lead worship at events, it is a real privilege to meet people and hear their stories. What amazes me the most is how quickly we get on the same page together in worship because of our unity in Christ. People around the world are responding to the truth of Jesus, which I really hope shines through in the songs.”





IMB photo

Whether she's playing basketball or leading a Bible study, Baptist representative Gena Wilson is intentional about pointing people to the cross.



IMB photos

Top photo: Gena Wilson prepares for an assembly at Glasgow's Springburn Academy where she serves as chaplain. **Bottom photo:** On a walk through her neighborhood, Wilson stops to talk with Max, who works at the local barber shop.

'Cancer can't touch heaven'

Once 'the American' in Scotland community, Wilson is now one of them even while home on leave

If you listen to Gena Wilson imitate the Scottish brogue, you'll think she was born in Glasgow. After 17 years, the woman from Beaufort, S.C., can speak in a Scottish accent that even the locals mistake as their own. She used to stick out as "the American" who for some inexplicable reason chose to live in one of the city's poorest areas.

Now she's just known to them as Gena — a friend, a mentor, a follower of Jesus.

She's led assemblies at the local high school, but most teenagers there have gotten to know her over a basketball or volleyball game, hamburgers at a café or Bible study in her apartment.

Loving others

When Graeme was suspended from school, Wilson counseled him. When Carol was beaten up by her boyfriend and needed a safe place to go in the middle of the night, she went to Wilson's flat. When Jessica's mother was threatening to throw herself out of the window, she called Wilson.

For Wilson, a Southern Baptist representative to Scotland, loving these young people is as easy — and as hard — as loving sons and daughters.

Wilson breathes the message of Jesus into these relationships, but it isn't always easy. She has seen some people turn to Christ and continue to follow Him. Others, like Graeme, have turned away from their faith

and chosen to believe in their own abilities.

"It saddens me that they would choose to think that they can manufacture a life for themselves that's greater than what God can manufacture for them," Wilson said.

Many years ago, Wilson and a ministry teammate spray-painted the gospel message in pictures in an old greenhouse — a popular teen hangout. Today the area is littered with used condoms and drug paraphernalia. Time and other graffiti have eclipsed the drawings, but Wilson can still see where a youth who used to attend her Bible studies painted on top: "Nobody cares, Gena."

Success is hard to measure in Glasgow. Addiction, violence and self-sufficiency war against her message of hope, deliverance and surrender.

Graeme was one of the kids Wilson met on her neighborhood's block of flats 11 years ago.

Alastair Cochrane, a science teacher at the school where Wilson has served as chaplain for nearly 10 years, said Graeme was one of the kids who was always in trouble, always getting into fights and skipping school. But then Graeme met Wilson.

Graeme said of Wilson, "She was inter-

ested in people. She didn't fight, she didn't go out and get drunk, she didn't laze about all day.

"There was also how she lived her faith," he continued, "trying to care for other people, trying to tell them about her faith and how that influenced her."

When Graeme started participating in school clubs with Wilson and then Bible studies in her flat, he made the decision to become a Christian.

The kid who was headed down the path of drugs, violence and dropping out of school graduated from the University of Glasgow, a service that Wilson attended sitting beside Graeme's mother.

'Continuing the journey'

But success was a double-edged sword for Graeme. He moved away to pursue further studies. He saw others doing good things without relying on God and his faith wavered.

Graeme talks regularly with Wilson over the phone and through social media. Wilson said, "I don't view him as a project. ... I get the privilege of continuing to journey with him, believing that what God has started in him, He's going to bring to completion."



WILSON

Wilson has to remind herself that God's plans are not her own. That message became evident on a scheduled trip to the United States in 2011.

She went to the doctor to have back pain checked out. The news in the days ahead wasn't what she expected to hear: It's a tumor wrapped around your spine. It's cancerous. You'll need surgery. You'll need chemotherapy.

And so her struggle against non-Hodgkin's lymphoma began — a challenge that lasted 17 months and had her wondering if she would see her beloved Scotland again.

Through social media, Wilson kept the messages going back to Scotland and around the world — God can be trusted even in the midst of cancer.

After nearly a year back in Glasgow, the cancer returned in the form of a brain tumor. She returned to South Carolina for treatment and in August 2013, her doctors told her she was cancer-free. Wilson is hopeful that she will make a full recovery and be back in Glasgow in 2014.

T.J. and Dena Odom of Alabama and Massachusetts joined Wilson's ministry team in Scotland in fall 2012. Wilson and the Odoms are among the nearly 5,000 Southern Baptist representatives internationally who are supported through Southern Baptists' gifts to the Cooperative Program.

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