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Southeast Asia

Photo courtesy of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church

# 'Risk-taking adventure with God'

## Dawson Memorial Baptist launches Major Missions Projects initiative

By Carrie Brown McWhorter  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**F**rom Birmingham to Maine, Asia and Africa, Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, is expanding its missions reach further than ever in an effort to raise up a new generation of missions volunteers.

At a business meeting Oct. 5 the church voted unanimously to accept the Major Missions Projects plan, a five-year missions strategy consisting of five projects that will require roughly \$5 million.

Plans for the Major Missions Projects initiative have been in the works for several months, according to Ben Hale, evangelism and missions pastor at Dawson. In fact the idea for a missions campaign in addition to the church's regular Cooperative Program (CP) giving has been around since 2007, though plans for the newly adopted program began in earnest about two years ago.

"The missions (committee) began to discuss specific ideas about how

the church might be challenged to go over, above and beyond for missions, which led to the Major Missions Projects," Hale said.

### Acts 1:8 strategy

The five projects fit within the church's Acts 1:8 missions strategy. To reach the local community, Dawson will create a ministry center to meet physical and spiritual needs in Birmingham.

Dawson also will partner with the North American Mission Board

(NAMB) and the Maine Baptist Association to plant at least five new churches and provide training for existing churches and ministries in Maine, which is considered one of the least Christian states in the United States, according to a Gallup poll taken earlier this year.

The remaining three projects will involve partnerships with International Mission Board (IMB) representatives. In North Africa, Dawson will assist Baptist missionaries in  
(See 'Moral,' page 7)

*"The missions (committee) began to discuss specific ideas about how the church might be challenged to go over, above and beyond for missions, which led to the Major Missions Projects."*

Ben Hale, evangelism and missions pastor  
Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham

# COMMENT

## The Shepherd Is Enough

It is a romantic picture — a shepherd leading the way through a winding valley while a flock of sheep lazily follow at his heels. On the edges of the flock one might even imagine a black and white border collie darting after a straying animal attracted by some tasty looking clump of grass. The picture is quiet and peaceful, even serene.

Psalm 23 sketches this idyllic scene across our minds with the words “the Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” Today few people understand those words experientially. Experience today is about mass production and traffic jams, about supermarkets and subdivisions. We know little about the role of the shepherd except that he was responsible for the sheep in his flock.

But that doesn’t stop us from picturing the rugged shepherd of the Bible dutifully leading and caring, providing and protecting the sheep that meant life to him and his family. We see David fending off the wild beast bent on devouring the flock, or the Good Shepherd treading through a stormy night hunting for a lost lamb.

Sometimes when life is tough, when pain and loss threaten to overcome us, we even wish that we had a shepherd; someone to look after us like the shepherd looked after the sheep.

Pain and loss have a way of isolating us from one another. Whether the pain is physical or emotional, one of its results is to make us feel alone because each person has to deal with their own hurts. No one can grieve for us or hurt for us.

### Emptiness that comes with grief

In grief, whatever its cause, one commonly feels alone. There can be a tremendous void where once joy bubbled up. One can feel empty and vulnerable.

It is not unusual for pain to drive one to panic, especially where one feels inadequate because of the new circumstances. Anxiety is high because of uncertainty about how we will cope with the new situation.

Depression can take many forms. One can



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

live in a fog where it is difficult to remember. One can stop sleeping or eating. More common is the feeling that nothing matters anymore so why get out of bed or why not binge on a quart of Blue Bell ice cream.

In our experiences with grief and pain who has not felt the temptation to just pull the covers over one’s head and stay in bed all the time, safely hiding from the pain of life?

Viktor Frankl in his famous book “Man’s Search for Meaning” relates his three-year experience in Kaufering, a Nazi concentration camp affiliated with Dachau concentration camp. From watching others Frankl eventually concluded he could predict which fellow prisoners would live or die by looking into their eyes.

He wrote that if a person had a reason to live, that person would find a way to survive no matter the circumstances. But if one had no reason to live, that person could not be kept alive.

A concentration camp is far from the pastoral scene of a shepherd and sheep but the words of Psalm 23 speak to the hurting no matter their circumstances. Psalm 23 assures that God is with us because “the Lord is my Shepherd.” The Psalm assures that when we are with God,

we are in a safe place because of the promise that “I shall not be in want.”

Psalm 23 never promises to take away the pain or to restore the former circumstances. Instead it promises that the person who knows God as their Shepherd will never be alone. God will always be present in every circumstance. His presence is not limited to the idyllic times of life. He is always with us.

One writer observed the most important thing about Psalm 23 is the assurance that one does not have to face bad things alone.

Still one might protest that they are unable to face the new circumstances; that they just do not have the physical or emotional strength to live with the changes. Like some in the concentration camp, their pain is so great they have no reason to live.

That might be a correct statement. By one’s

self an individual may not have the inner strength to deal with the new circumstances created by pain and loss. But that is the glory of Psalm 23. One is not alone. One doesn’t have to depend on one’s own strength.

It is the Shepherd who helps one lie down in green pastures, who leads beside still waters, who restores the soul, who leads through the shadows of death itself. When one has a Shepherd, one relies on the strength and resources of the Shepherd.

It is the Shepherd who drives the pain and emptiness from the eyes of hurting sheep and, through a personal rela-

tionship between the sheep and the Shepherd, fills the eyes with hope.

Psalm 23 says so clearly that despite all the pain and hurt, grief and loss we can get up every morning to face the world because we know there is Someone who cares for us. That Someone is our Shepherd. 🙏

***“It is the Shepherd who drives the pain and emptiness from the eyes of hurting sheep and, through a personal relationship between the sheep and the Shepherd, fills the eyes with hope.”***



***“The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”***

Psalm 23



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

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# 'The Life of a Pastor'

## 2014 Alabama Baptist Pastors Conference to focus on 2 Cor. 11:28

By Maggie Walsh  
The Alabama Baptist

**P**astors spend most of their time ministering to people and pouring their lives into other people. [This] is their day to come and be ministered to," said Kevin Blackwell, 2014 Alabama Baptist Pastors Conference president.

Broadly focusing on the message of 2 Corinthians 11:28, the one-day conference will be held Nov. 10 at Lakeside Baptist Church, Birmingham, beginning with a morning session at 8:30 a.m. An afternoon and an evening session will begin at 1:20 and 6:30, respectively.

Themed "The Life of a Pastor," the event is designed to inspire, encourage and challenge pastors with practical advice for day-to-day issues.

"The whole conference is intentionally developed to spiritually refresh those attending," Blackwell said.

Teman Knight, conference vice president and pastor of Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, echoed Blackwell's need for being refreshed. "As pastors we are always pouring ourselves into other people. The pastors conference is a great opportunity to be on the receiving side and allow God to use others to refill and recharge your life."

Knight said past conferences have always encouraged and challenged him to be more effective in ministry — and he is anticipating the same effect this year.

### Guest speakers

Speakers will include Buddy Champion, pastor of First Baptist Church, Trussville; John Croyle, motivational speaker and founder of Big Oak Ranch children's home; Danny Lanier, pastor of Northcrest Baptist Church, Meridian, Miss.; James Merritt, pastor of Cross Pointe Church, Duluth, Ga.; Herb Reavis Jr., pastor of North Jacksonville Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Fla.; Willy Rice, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Clearwater, Fla.; Danny Wood, pastor of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills; and Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas.

Blackwell said, "The speakers will expound the Scriptures on subjects such as prayer, character, family, our calling and discouragement."

Pastors should come "with a heart that has sought the heart of God," expecting God to transform lives and refocus ministries, said Blackwell, who also is the assistant to the president for church relations at Samford University in Birmingham.

Keeping in line with the goal of refreshing pastors, the conference also will feature "The Refuge" where pastors can go at any point during the conference and have someone pray with them.

Worship for the day will feature the Vaughn Forest Church, Montgomery, worship team and Samford's A Capella Choir, with

Lakeside Baptist's minister of music and worship Chris Diffey leading the evening worship.

Blackwell was recently shaken by a statistic by Pastoral Care, Inc. that said more than 1,700 pastors are leaving the ministry every month and only 1 in 10 pastors remain long enough to retire from ministry.

"There are a growing number of pastors who are simply walking away from their calling. It's more than a trend — it's a reality. I know

that a one-day conference is not the cure, but if it can make a difference in a few lives then the conference will be counted a victory.

"I believe the presence of God will be strong among His servants.

... It will be a great time of encouraging each other,

finding resources for ministry in the exhibit area and worshipping with hundreds of other [participants]."

Both pastors and their wives are encouraged to attend. ☪

**For more information, visit  
alpastorsconference.com.**

## LAKESIDE BAPTIST, BIRMINGHAM — NOV. 10



**CHAMPION**



**CROYLE**



**LANIER**



**MERRITT**



**REAVIS**



**RICE**



**WOOD**



**YOUNG**

## PASTORS CONFERENCE PROGRAM

### Morning Session

8:30 Pre-session music  
9:00 Worship  
9:15 Welcome and prayer  
9:20 Worship  
9:25 Prayer  
9:30 *Message: Buddy Champion*  
10:10 Worship  
10:25 *Message: Danny Wood*  
11:05 Worship  
11:15 Prayer  
11:20 *Message: Willy Rice*  
12:00 Prayer

### Afternoon Session

1:20 Pre-session concert  
1:40 Welcome/election of officers  
1:50 Prayer  
1:55 *Message: John Croyle*  
2:30 Praise and worship  
2:45 Prayer  
2:50 *Message: Danny Lanier*  
3:30 Praise and worship  
3:45 Prayer  
3:50 *Message: Herb Reavis Jr.*  
4:30 Prayer

### Evening Session

6:30 Pre-session music  
6:40 Welcome  
6:45 Praise and worship  
6:55 Prayer  
7:00 *Message: James Merritt*  
7:40 Praise and worship  
7:50 Prayer  
7:55 Special music  
8:05 *Message: Ed Young*  
8:45 Special prayer time for pastors

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*“Instead of panicking, we want to find volunteers who will work in other countries where the fields are ‘white unto harvest.’”*

Charlotte Cearley  
Southern Baptist representative

# ‘Turn fear into FAITH’

## EBOLA CASES by COUNTRY

**1. Guinea**  
Case Count: 1,540  
Deaths: 904

**2. Liberia**  
Case Count: 4,665  
Deaths: 2,705

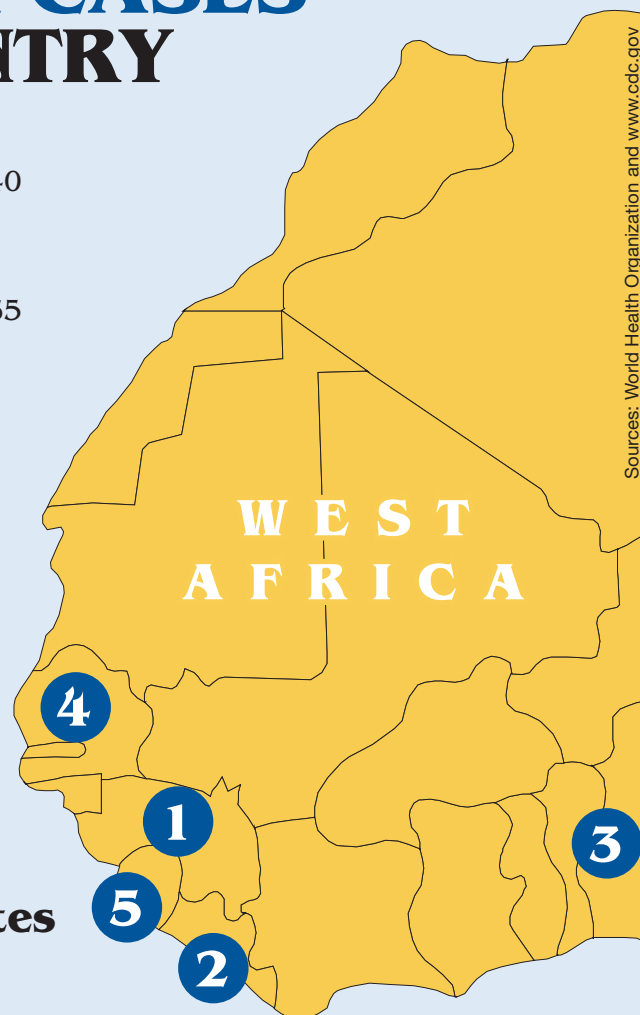
**3. Nigeria**  
Case Count: 0\*  
Deaths: 8

**4. Senegal**  
Case Count: 0\*  
Deaths: 0

**5. Sierra Leone**  
Case Count: 3,706  
Deaths: 1,259

**6. Spain**  
Case Count: 1  
Deaths: 0

**7. United States**  
Case Count: 3  
Deaths: 1



**Total Case Count: 9,936 / Total Deaths: 4,877**  
(as of Oct. 24, 2014)

\*The outbreaks of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Senegal and Nigeria were declared over on Oct. 17 and Oct. 19, respectively. A national EVD outbreak is considered to be over when 42 days has passed since the last patient in isolation tested laboratory negative for EVD.

Sources: World Health Organization and www.cdc.gov

## Southern Baptist representatives to Senegal respond to Ebola fear in US

By Bob Terry  
The Alabama Baptist

When members of an Alabama Baptist church shook hands and hugged the two Southern Baptist representatives during a recent Wednesday evening, the couple was surprised. Since arriving back in the United States people have literally inched away from Tim and Charlotte Cearley as they explain they are Southern Baptist representatives who serve in Senegal, a West African nation.

Tim Cearley is the International Mission Board's (IMB) head strategy leader for Sub-Saharan Africa, which is comprised of 49 nations. Charlotte Cearley, daughter of long-time Alabama Baptist leader Harrell Cushing and his wife, Ann, is prayer strategy coordinator for the region.

Tim Cearley said, “What is shocking to us is how widespread the fear of Ebola is in the United States. We understand being cautious but in some ways the fears seem irrational.”

He recalled a recent incident where a volunteer medical missions team leader was verbally attacked and physically threatened when news of an upcoming missions trip to Senegal, an Ebola-free nation, was announced on a local TV station. Among the more than 30,000 comments on the station's website about the story were threats that the community would take over the sponsoring

church and not allow the volunteers back in the community. Also several comments said children would be pulled from the church's kindergarten if the missions trip took place.

“Some of the threats were pretty strong,” Tim Cearley said.

Several churches have withdrawn invitations for the Cearleys to speak during their four-month stateside assignment because they serve in West Africa. Also at least five training events for potential volunteers to work with the more than 200 unreached people groups in West Africa have been cancelled.

Charlotte Cearley said, “We understand Ebola is a frightening disease. But there are 49 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and only three have (a severe outbreak of) Ebola. Instead of panicking we want to find volunteers who will work in other countries where the fields are ‘white unto harvest.’”

### Potential missions trips

In one area of West Africa, made up of seven countries, U.S. churches make more than 300 missions trips a year. The trips primarily focus on reaching tribes and people groups, mainly Muslim, in those countries who have never heard the name of Jesus. If these trips are cancelled it will mean the loss of more than 10,000 potential personal presentations of the gospel.

Tim Cearley added, “We can't recommend volunteers go to the three countries with (the most severe) Ebola outbreak — Liberia, Si-

erra Leone and Guinea — right now but we are trying to encourage life as normal in the other countries. This is a time when people's hearts are open.”

As the Cearleys seek volunteers for Ebola-free areas of West Africa they also are trying to coordinate help in the three countries most severely impacted by the disease.

Three families and two Journeymen (a two-year missions position with the IMB) currently serve as Southern Baptist representatives in Guinea. One family serves in a major hospital that, to date, has been Ebola-free. Two couples work in outlying areas where the disease has struck in churches where they serve. One couple serves near a town where protesters stormed an Ebola center and carried infected patients back into the community.

“These families have each served for more than 20 years in Guinea,” Tim Cearley said. “They are being cautious but for now they are trying to show people how to live around Ebola and use the crisis to share about our eternal hope in Jesus Christ.”

IMB representatives in Liberia were pulled out of the nation about six weeks ago, Tim Cearley said, when it became impossible for them to continue their ministries. Still several are begging to go back.

He described a recent conversation with a representative from Liberia who wept as she sat in his home because she had at least 50 teacher friends in the northern part of Liberia who were starving to death. Food traditionally flowed to them across the shared border

with Guinea but now that border is closed. People have no food and no way to get food.

There are no Southern Baptist representatives living in Sierra Leone at this time.

Demonstrating the love of Christ through ministering to human need is a guiding principle for work in Sub-Saharan Africa, Tim Cearley said. That is why he and others are asking, “What would Jesus do with these Ebola-impacted countries?”

### Educating people

“In a crisis like this the Body of Christ can do something physically to make a difference,” he said. Baptist representatives are strategizing on what they can do. Through Baptist Global Response (BGR), the Southern Baptist relief arm, efforts are underway to educate people in nearby countries such as Togo and Niger about the threat of Ebola, basic hygiene and nutrition and how to prevent Ebola's spread. Initial educational efforts also have started in Liberia. To make a donation to these projects, visit [www.gobgr.org](http://www.gobgr.org).

BGR also has identified some partner organizations through which it can work in Liberia and Sierra Leone to address issues such as food aid, medical teams and ways to help Ebola survivors.

Tim Cearley asked that Southern Baptists pray for innocent people in the affected area who cannot find food and cannot escape. “Baptists have to find a way to turn fear into faith and make a difference in this crisis.”



BNG photo

The Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention has distributed food and sanitary supplies since the outbreak of the Ebola virus.

# 'Growing crisis'

## More groups collect food for Ebola-stricken countries

**A**labama Baptists were among the first to send food to West African countries to help with food shortages but Baptist groups in other states also are beginning to help.

Recent reports by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank warn that Liberia — hardest hit by the virus — is descending into what the *Washington Post* called “economic hell.”

As people abandon fields and factories, food is becoming increasingly scarce and restrictions on public transport and internal travel are making it difficult to distribute food that is available. Worst-case estimates of the impact on the economy as a whole are catastrophic, the *Post* reported.

“People are terrified by how fast the disease is spreading,” Alexis Bonte, a representative in Liberia for the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization, said in the FAO report. “Neighbors, friends and family members are dying within just a few days of exhibiting shocking symptoms, the causes of which are not fully understood by many local communities. This leads them to speculate that water, food or even crops could be responsible. Panic ensues, causing farmers to abandon their fields for weeks.”

That’s consistent with reports received by Dean Miller, team leader of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board’s global missions team.

“Liberian leaders have told me that while many people are dying of Ebola, many more may die of starvation,” he said.

After a recent conference call initiated by Baptist World Aid — which included Liberian Baptist leaders — confirmed the growing crisis, Miller decided to act. “This was something we could actually do,” he

said. “We can’t cure the disease and we can only do so much medically. But we can provide food.”

Miller contacted Stop Hunger Now, an international hunger relief agency that partners with the Virginia Baptist Mission Board. The organization told Miller their warehouse in South Africa still had nearly 145,000 meals, none of them assigned. What’s more, transporting them to Liberia would take only three weeks, about half the time it would take to ship from the U.S.

Several Baptist General Association of Virginia congregations provided funds to ship the meals, which should arrive soon in Liberia. They’ll be distributed by representatives of the Liberia Missionary and Educational Convention.

### Shipping costs

Also contributing to shipping costs was Texas Baptists Disaster Recovery (TBDR), a component of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. That contribution was part of a much larger effort launched by the TBDR, which has arranged for about 570,000 meals to be sent to Liberia.

The effort was prompted in part by a visit to Texas by Olu Menjay, president of the Liberian convention, who is currently living in Alabama with his family until conditions are safe for them to return.

Meanwhile the Washington-based Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention is coordinating an additional effort to distribute food in Liberia. A recent “Heart for Liberia” event in Philadelphia collected more than seven tons of food and medical supplies.

The convention’s executive secretary-treasurer, David Goatley, said Oct. 17 he and president Gregory Moss are working with other Baptist leaders to provide financial support to distribute food and sanitary equipment in Liberia. (BNG)

# 20-foot container

## Food collected in Alabama on its way to Liberia

**A**s first responders to the food crisis in West Africa, Alabama Baptists began collecting food to assist with the food depletion in several countries following the Ebola outbreak (visit [www.thealabamabaptist.org](http://www.thealabamabaptist.org) or see the Oct. 9 issue for the full story).

At press time, a 20-foot container filled with dry goods was scheduled to ship to Liberia by boat Oct. 31. Once in country a Liberian Baptist Convention response team will help distribute the food to those in need. The container was packed Oct. 18.

Churches, children’s missions groups, Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) groups, individuals and businesses donated goods to the Help Liberia Food Drive, according to Candice Lee, marketing director for the WMU Foundation.

### Working together

The food drive was organized in part by the WMU Foundation; Eddie Gibson, originally from Liberia and pastor of Brewster Road Community Church, Birmingham; and Olu Menjay, president of Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention and vice president of the Baptist World Alliance. Menjay and his family are currently living in Bir-



Photo courtesy of Candice Lee

Liberians in Alabama and WMU Foundation staff finish packing the 20-foot container with food Oct. 18.

mingham until it is safe to return to Liberia.

Among the churches that gave were Shades Crest Baptist Church, Hoover; Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Birmingham; First Baptist Church, Guntersville; Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Hueytown; and Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham. Huffman High School in Birmingham also gave to the food drive as did countless individuals.

More than \$12,000 was donated to WMU Foundation’s HEART Fund (Humanitarian Emergency Aid for Rebuilding Tomorrow) to pay for shipping and purchase additional food to send, Lee said. (TAB)

# 3 helpful tips

## Churches can help keep communities from panicking

### 1. Educate.

Know the facts about Ebola. Not everyone who goes to or has been to West Africa contracts Ebola. James Graham, pastor of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Herndon, Va., said, “There are so many Liberians that are a part of our congregation that we have had people that have returned from Liberia subsequent to the outbreak and folks that have gone and returned. And so we want to make sure that our people know (there’s) no need to be alarmed.”

### 2. Strategize.

Like in any crisis, Christians are called to be the hands and feet and minister during times of need. If Christians can look for solutions and ways to minister during crises, then opportunities will arise to share Him with those who may have been closed off in the past. Graham said Southern Baptists have been known for years for the “abil-

ity to respond to disasters, whether it’s a hurricane disaster, tornadoes in Alabama or those other things that have taken place across this country. So now is a good time for Southern Baptists to also be responsive to this crisis.”

### 3. Love.

Remind fellow members and congregations that the people who have been infected and are dying are mothers, fathers, children, friends. Even if the Church is not able to help with the medical aspect of the illness, believers can choose to respond to the situation with love and prayer rather than with fear. George Mason, pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church, Dallas, said, “Are we going to move away from people, out of fear? Are we going to protect ourselves and live for ourselves, or are we going to move toward one another out of love, because we know that the end of the story is already promised?” (BP, TAB)

# Across ALABAMA'S Associations

To submit news items, email [news@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:news@thealabamabaptist.org) or call 205-870-4720, ext. 100, at least three weeks prior to the event.

## BESSEMER

► **Maytown Church** will host the Blackwood Brothers in concert Nov. 17, 7 p.m. A love offering will be collected at the end of the concert. John Killian is pastor.

## COLUMBIA

► **Malvern Church, Slocomb**, will celebrate homecoming and Harvest Day on Nov. 9. Services will begin at 10:30 a.m. Don Irwin will speak. A covered dish lunch will follow the service. Hosea Parker is pastor. ► **Smyrna Church, Columbia**, will celebrate homecoming Nov. 2. Sunday School will be at 9:45 a.m. and worship will begin at 10:45 a.m. Jerry Grandstaff will speak. Special music will be by April Wilson and Danny and Diane Hooper. Lunch and fellowship will follow the service. James Bell is pastor.

## LAMAR

► **Tyler Marsh** is the new youth minister for **First Church, Vernon**.



MARSH

He holds an associate's degree from East Mississippi Community College and is currently enrolled at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. He and his wife, Lindsey, have three children. Randy Tolleson Jr. is pastor.

## COOSA RIVER

► **Lincoln Church** will have a fall festival Nov. 1, 4-7 p.m. There will be food, fun, games and a

hayride. For information call 205-763-7351. Bill Goodwin is pastor.

## MADISON

► **Mable Hill Church, Ardmore**, will have a fall festival Oct. 31, 6-7:30 p.m. There will be hayrides, games, food, fun and candy. No scary costumes please. Mable Hill also will host Compassion Trio on Nov. 2, 5 p.m. A love offering will be collected at the end of the concert. A chicken stew and chili supper will follow. Mike Clark is pastor.

## ETOWAH

► **Hudson Keith** is the new pastor of **First Church, Glencoe**. He previously served as pastor of Blooming Grove Church, Jasper. He holds a bachelor of science in cross cultural relations and a master of theological studies from Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va. He and his wife, Joann, have four children.

## SAND MOUNTAIN

► **Dustin Henshaw** is the new pastor of **Happy Home Church, Henagar**. He previously served as pastor of Edgefield Church, Stevenson. He holds a bachelor's degree and doctor of theology from Slidell Baptist College in Louisiana. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two children.



HENSHAW

**Mobile**. He previously served as pastor of Second Church, Jacksonville, Ark. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from Blue Mountain College in Mississippi; and a master of divinity and doctor of philosophy from Mid-America Seminary in Cordova, Tenn. He and his wife, Cristy, have three children.

## TUSCALOOSA

► **Jerry Haley** is the new pastor of **Cornelius Chapel Church, Buhl**. He previously served as interim pastor of



HALEY

Northridge Church, Northport. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from Samford University in Birmingham; a master's degree from Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.; and a doctor of ministry from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Joyce, have three children. Also, **Cornelius Chapel** will hold tours of a life-size replica of the Old Testament tabernacle of Moses located at The Red Rooster Farm in Coker. Tours will be Nov. 10-15, 10-11 a.m. and 3-6 p.m. The tours will begin at the top of each hour and will last approximately 35 minutes. For tour information call 205-292-7971. ► **Crestline Church, Tuscaloosa**, will have a fall festival Oct. 30, 6-8:30 p.m. There will be bounce houses, hayrides, hot dogs, games, candy and prizes. For information call 205-344-5011. Irby Jackson is pastor. ☪

# ALABAMA UPDATES

PEOPLE, CHURCHES MAKING NEWS ACROSS THE STATE

## Anderson celebrates 20 years as pastor of Clements

Tim Anderson, pastor of Clements Baptist Church, Athens, celebrated a personal milestone Oct. 26 — 20 years as pastor of one church.

"I feel that as long as a pastor has a vision for his church, he should stay until that vision is complete," Anderson said of his ministry at Clements Baptist.

Anderson received his education from Samford University in Birmingham, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Andersonville Theological Seminary in Camilla, Ga.

In addition to serving as pastor of Clements, he has served on the University of Mobile's board of regents and currently serves as president and director of International Congress on Revival (ICR) in South Africa; Zimbabwe; Haiti; Israel; Budapest, Hungary; and South America.

Anderson said the congregation's support of his call to become involved with ICR was a pivotal point in his ministry.

"(Clements) has always shared my vision and passion for the community and nation. ... They embraced (ICR) and now travel with me into multiple countries each year, equipping pastors and key lay leaders."

Adding a new building to church grounds and the April 2011 tornadoes also were turning points for Clements and for Anderson.

"Our church became the hands and feet of Jesus during that time," Anderson said of the tornadoes' aftermath. "If we had not shown the love and compassion of Jesus through that heart-breaking time, we would have missed God's plan totally."

To celebrate its pastor, the church had a surprise reception honoring Anderson and his wife, Sherry, following the morning service. Congratulatory videos from Bill Stafford, Ted Traylor and Johnny Hunt were part of the celebration.

Additionally, the Limestone Baptist Association church gave Anderson and his wife a month-long sabbatical for rest and renewal.

"I feel like I am the most fortunate pastor in the entire world. ... I look forward to the next season and chapter of our ministry."

Anderson and his wife have three children and one granddaughter. (Maggie Walsh)



ANDERSON

## Enon celebrates McWilliams' 20th anniversary

Enon Baptist Church, Morris, recognized Ken McWilliams for his 20 years on staff of the North Jefferson Baptist Association church Sept. 7.

A native of Russellville, McWilliams earned his bachelor's degree in music education from the University of North Alabama in Florence.

He served as a music assistant at First Baptist Church, Russellville, and was called into ministry at Highland Baptist Church, Florence, while in college. He later served as the minister of music and students at First Baptist Church, Sheffield, and as minister of music and students at two other churches in the state.

McWilliams was hired as Enon Baptist's interim music minister in April 1994 and became the full-time minister of music and youth in September of the same year. He served in that position until 2007 when he became the minister of music and administration.

He is the president-elect of the Alabama Singing Men, which he has been a part of since college.

On Sept. 7, McWilliams was presented with a commemorative plaque by the church and a love offering. The church displayed a photo slideshow filled with memories of his 20 years of service, McWilliams said.

"I would like to thank the church for a wonderful 20 years," McWilliams said of Enon. "I pray that I could be just part of the blessing that the church has been to me (and my wife Gail) through the years." (Neisha Fuson)



MCWILLIAMS



Photo courtesy of Madrid Baptist Church, Cottonwood

## Cottonwood's Madrid Baptist honors longtime pianist

Madrid Baptist Church, Cottonwood, celebrates and recognizes Sara Elliot (center with plaque), who has served as the Columbia Baptist Association church's pianist for 50 years. She also was presented a plaque by Pastor Jayson Kirk on Aug. 17. She is pictured here with family members.

# ‘Moral imperative’

‘We expect every member to find a way to serve,’ Pastor Fenton says

(continued from page 1)

their efforts to plant churches and disciple believers. In Tanzania, Dawson will construct and equip a pediatric wing for the Kigoma Baptist Hospital and send medical teams to help at the hospital. A second building project will provide funds for construction at a Baptist hospital and a middle school in Southeast Asia.

In selecting the projects the Dawson missions team considered the church’s vision statement, the church’s people and financial resources and existing relationships with IMB and NAMB representatives, Hale said.

The projects will supplement CP efforts and will be fully funded by offerings and pledges given in addition to regular tithes and offerings. Supporters will fund the missions campaign between January 2015 and May 2018 but

the projects will begin according to finances and needs, Hale said. He added that no debt will be incurred to support the projects.

Michael Lytle, a deacon at Dawson and chairman of the church’s finance committee, said the process has truly been a team effort. He added that the unanimous approval of the projects reflects church members’ excitement about the plan.

“The plan was really born out of (the vision) to take missions into every level of our congregation, as well as around the world,” Lytle said. “Whether someone can give an hour, a week or a month, drive across the street or fly around the world, we want everyone to be able to get involved.”

One of the goals for the projects is to be good stewards of the financial resources God has provided and to involve the Dawson church family in missions, according to Pastor Gary Fenton.

“Dawson is not a good spectator church, in that we expect every member to find a way to serve,” Fenton said. “We seek to provide strategies that give people an opportunity to do the will of God through

local and international missions.”

In the past Dawson members have participated in short- and long-term missions projects in Birmingham and other places around the nation and world, Fenton said. The Major Missions Projects is a way to further engage church members in the Great Commission, he said.

“We are seeking to teach that doing missions is a Christian moral imperative and

intentionally teaching that missions is not doing good for God, but the inevitable response of a person who has received God’s grace,” Fenton said.

The Major Missions Projects initiative will stretch the Dawson church family in both giving and volunteering, Fenton said, especially since the church does not plan to reduce any of its ongoing missions and ministry projects. Fenton calls the plan a “risk-taking adventure with God.”

“The church is not naïve about this. We are fully aware that we cannot do this but that God can,” he said. “I think this is the most exciting chapter in the church’s history.”



Photo courtesy of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church  
Two girls sell fruit in front of a medical clinic in North Africa.



Photo courtesy of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, will construct and equip a pediatric wing for the Kigoma Baptist Hospital in Tanzania similar to the ward pictured here. The church also will send medical teams to help at the hospital.

## Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

Holy Spirit and Holy Living

### Walking As Light (Part 2 of 2)

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

Last week we began looking at aspects of Christian living in terms of walking as children of light. Our focus at that time was on God’s provisions for enabling us to walk as light. We continue this week with additional thoughts from Ephesians 5:7–14, which will further illuminate the idea of being light in the Lord. This week, we think about God’s purposes for us walking as light. Two ideas emerge from the passage. One purpose is for us to discern and then demonstrate what pleases the Lord (v. 10). In broad terms, what pleases the Lord is “all that is good and right and true” (v. 9). Goodness shines brightly in a world that is beset with bad attitudes and actions. Uprightness stands out all the more when demonstrated against the background of moral standards that have become bent out of shape. Truth is like a shining beacon when it can be seen in Christians who believe truth, embody it and share it with others. We can speak words that are good, upright and true (and we should), but all around us are those who need to see the qualities being lived before them.

#### Defeating darkness

A related purpose for walking as light is to defeat what promotes darkness. Our passage refers to “works of darkness,” which are unfruitful. Part of God’s purpose for us is that we do not participate in such dark deeds but also that we should “expose them” (v. 11). The practical question then is how does God mean for His children to expose deeds of darkness? Our passage points to several ways. One way to isolate such deeds is by separation from them. God’s command is to the point: “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness.” A firm but loving refusal to join in with those who are not yet light in the Lord exposes those deeds because of a clear distinction between Christian behavior and non-Christian behavior. Another part of God’s victory plan

is that the darkness be defeated by our silence about what goes on in the darkness. The command is, “For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret” (v. 12). To our shame sometimes some Christians experience a measure of carnal delight in talking about the secret (and not so secret) sins of the rich and famous as well as of nonpublic figures. To speak to others with graphic descriptions of the bad things people do is to risk spreading evil ideas, stirring shameful desires and suggesting emulation of the deeds our words describe. In a way silence helps put the brakes on the spread of ungodly influences stemming from works of darkness.

#### Children of light

In addition God’s plan for defeating the deeds of darkness is for children of light to let our light shine consistently. Just as refusal to speak of dark deeds helps stem their influence so does godly living outshine the darkness. The passage declares, “When anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible” (v. 13). The contrast between being light in the Lord and being darkness in sin is made more vivid when the light is shining in dark places.

The best part of God’s plan for defeating the darkness is to call those in darkness to come to the light. Such a call is the concluding part of this week’s passage, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you” (v. 14).

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.





Photo courtesy of the University of Mobile

University of Mobile student Brydon Fox helps serve birthday cake to residents at a Mobile-area nursing home.

# Project Serve

## UMobile ministers to community with day of service

**A**s the late September morning breeze swept over their campus, about 1,200 students, faculty and staff gathered in front of J.L. Bedsole Library at the University of Mobile (UMobile). Wearing maroon T-shirts bearing the words "Project Serve" over an outline of the city of Mobile skyline, they heard university President Mark Foley give them the theme for their fourth annual day of service. This year the effort reached 65 sites across a two-county area.

"You are an agent of love. You are going to be touching people," Foley said. "This is also about what happens in you, not just what happens through you."

Since its inception in 2011, Project Serve has impacted businesses, schools, health-care facilities, municipal grounds and countless individuals.

One group made up of the UMobile tennis team and Coach Uwe Tittle visited several fourth-grade classrooms at Dodge Elementary School in Mobile to demonstrate how force and motion are used in tennis.

Across town, the hallways of Ella Grant Elementary School in Prichard were filled with more than 60 student volunteers. They put up colorful bulletin boards, organized closets, read to students, inventoried old computers, painted bathrooms and cut grass.

### 'Love the partnership'

Interim principal Hannah Hart said fifth graders attended a morning assembly where volunteers talked about the types of careers they were preparing for and the hard work and determination it took to succeed. The UMobile students shared the importance of making good grades throughout school.

"I love the partnership," Hart said. "It gives our kids something to aspire to. I am also impressed with the level of service the college students are giving."

Foley and about 75 students and professors in the

School of Christian Ministries volunteered at Mobile Municipal Park to paint signs and playground equipment and to mark distance on a walking trail.

Doug Wilson, dean of the School of Christian Ministries, said, "Jesus tells us in Mark 10, 'I have not come to be served, but to serve.' As followers of Christ we want to serve others as well, not just in the church building but also in the community."

### Mobile mayor joins in

Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson joined Foley and volunteers as they scraped rust off playground equipment and coated it with red paint. Donning a Project Serve T-shirt, Stimpson thanked the volunteers for their service.

"Project Serve sets a marker for all of our citizens to realize they too can participate and help in making our community a better place to live," Stimpson said. "We really, really appreciate them being out here."

Other teams volunteered at locations including Little Sisters of the Poor assisted living facility, the Alabama Regional School for the Deaf and Blind and the William F. Green Veteran's Home.

Students at UMobile take advantage of Project Serve to get involved in their communities. Many see it as chance for personal growth as well.

John Craft, a senior theology major from Birmingham, said he has participated in Project Serve all four years. "This brings us together as students, as friends and as family," Craft said. Working side-by-side creates a special bond within the UMobile community, setting the stage "so we can do ministry further in life together."

Foley added, "The University of Mobile mission of 'Changing Lives to Change the World' isn't about education alone — it's about transforming the nation by meeting both spiritual and physical needs of people. Through Project Serve, the University of Mobile impacts thousands of lives by being the hands and feet of the gospel of Christ throughout the community." (UMobile)

## Someone You Should Know

By Leigh Pritchett, Correspondent *The Alabama Baptist*

### Edna Jennings



JENNINGS

*New Prospect Baptist Church  
No. 2, Centre  
Cherokee Baptist Association*

**FAVORITE VERSE:** Philippians 4:13

**FAVORITE HYMN:** "Amazing Grace"

**HOBBIES:** Cooking, sewing, reading

**FAMILY STATUS:** Widow for six years after 56 years of marriage to husband, Jack; children: Vicki Beck, Cherry LeCroy and Gifford Jennings; six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren

*Edna Jennings, a 78 year old who lives between Centre and the Georgia state line, is "on the go." She runs in 5K events with her church's Run for God team. For 20 years she ran a catering business. Since 2009 she has operated the Sageberry restaurant near Centre. She and her church's Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) have used both businesses to minister to their community by delivering the surplus of prepared food to homebound people. That effort now serves about 40 people each Monday. In addition she has been involved in her church by teaching pre-school or adult Sunday School, AWANA and Discipleship Training, serving on committees, being active in WMU and currently chairing the WMU's missions fund efforts. In 1987 she helped to form McCord's Crossroads Homemakers Club, Inc., with 10 women from different denominations whose goal was to reach people for Jesus. The club has increased to 33 men and women who also teach individuals certain skills to improve their life situations. Currently the group is assisting in an endeavor to convert a former church building into a community center.*

**Q: What influences in your life pointed you to Christ at the beginning of your faith journey?**

A: My parents. They didn't send us to church; they went to church regularly. We knew on Sundays we were going to church. I was 13 and it was

during a revival when I asked Jesus to come into my heart. I just wanted to be doing the right thing and serve Jesus.

**Q: When and how were you led into this ministry work?**

A: My hand just always goes up when they ask for volunteers. I like to be involved.

**Q: What does this ministry work demand?**

A: A willingness to serve. It's not demanding. It's a blessing.

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

A: A blessing.

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

A: The two (children) who live here help me tremendously. If I need help I can always call on them.

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

A: I hope to continue to do even more, if possible. I think, with God's grace, I will.

**Q: What difference will this ministry work make for you in the future?**

A: I think it depends on whether I keep my health and can keep going. Right now I have no health problems at all.

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

A: Changed everything. It's not about me anymore; it's about God and Jesus. 🙏

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

Pastor Jay Wolf (right) of FBC Montgomery honors church member Bill Lambert with a plaque Oct. 12 after Lambert completed his 50th international missions trip.



Photo by Doug Rogers



Photo courtesy of Bill Lambert

Bill Lambert helps provide clean water to young children in Champerico, Guatemala. The older children also were taught about hygiene.

# 'Missions entrepreneur'

## FBC Montgomery recognizes church member for 50 international missions trips

By Carrie Brown McWhorter  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**J**ay Wolf likes to tell the golf club story when he talks about missions volunteer Bill Lambert.

Lambert — a member of First Baptist Church, Montgomery, where Wolf is pastor — retired in 1997. He immediately had a custom set of golf clubs made and expected to spend a few years learning to play golf. But it didn't take long for him to realize he wasn't really interested in golf.

One day at church Lambert heard a missions testimony that changed his perspective on retirement. Before long he took his first missions trip and looked for opportunities to serve. His work has helped bring clean drinking water, medical care and, most importantly, the love of Jesus to people around the world.

Lambert's first missions trip was to Mexico in 1998. Since then he has completed 50 international missions trips. First, Montgomery, recognized Lambert's milestone Oct. 12.

"Bill has become a missions entrepreneur in our church," Wolf said. "He loves the Lord and he and his wife are models of what authentic Christianity looks like."

Wolf said Lambert does not just talk about the Great Commission, he lives it. His life inspires and instructs, Wolf said.

"Many Baby Boomers have time and resources to spend on missions for Christ and Bill's life shows how to do it," Wolf said.

### Providing clean water

One of the projects closest to Lambert's heart is improving access to clean water in impoverished communities. He first heard of Africa's water needs when Tim Cearley, International Mission Board head strategy leader for Sub-Saharan Africa, then a Southern Baptist representative in Mozambique, spoke at First, Montgomery. Cearley mentioned he needed a water-drilling rig that would fit in the back of a truck. Church members bought a drill kit from a manufacturing company in Opelika and shipped it to Cearley. When Cearley needed volunteers to come to Africa and use the drill, Lambert committed to go.

He didn't want to go unprepared, however.

"I didn't want to get all the way to Africa and not know what I was doing," Lambert said.

So he bought a drilling rig and tried it out on his farm. It was not a successful venture. The drill bit got stuck in the bottom of the hole. Lambert called the manufacturing company and asked them how to avoid the problem, which turned out to be a good call.

"When we were drilling in Africa we ran into the same problem, but I knew what to do and was able to get it unstuck," Lambert said.

Wolf remembers the Mozambique missions experience as a turning point when the Jesus Film was shared.

"Bill was set up in the edge of a school soccer field with 300 to 400 people watching him. We were out doing evangelism, showing the Jesus Film for the first time in the Nda language and lots of people were coming to Christ," Wolf said.

It was after that trip that Lambert gave away the golf clubs and he has not stopped doing missions since, Wolf said.

Lambert returned from Mozambique with a desire to learn more about drilling wells. He trained with Living Water International, a faith-based nonprofit organization headquartered in Texas that helps provide safe

drinking water in developing countries. Since then, he has drilled at least 14 wells, primarily in Central America. He also has helped set up simple and inexpensive water filtration systems in India and other developing countries. Lambert said he recognized that providing clean drinking water not only

meets a need, it gets people interested.

But helping provide water is not all Lambert does. He also has helped build churches in Brazil and an orphanage in Malawi. He has assisted in famine and drought relief in Kenya. He went to Peru twice with one of his doctors to do medical and church planting work. Closer to home, he made 15 trips to the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina devastated the region. At First, Montgomery, he teaches citizenship classes to international students in the conversational English ministry.

He never had an objective in mind other than helping where he could. He told his church family he wanted to be like Caleb in the Bible, still strong in his 80s. Now 76, he plans to continue working for the Lord as long as he can.

"I don't think God planned for us to reach 65, quit work and not do for other people," Lambert said. "In my opinion true joy in life doesn't come from things that we do for ourselves but from what we do for others."



Photo courtesy of Bill Lambert

Bill Lambert (front) installs a PVC cap to keep contaminants out of a well in Champerico, Guatemala.



Photo courtesy of Bill Lambert

Bill Lambert takes time to pause for a photo with young girls who just returned from Vacation Bible School in Rosario, Guatemala.

## Former Birmingham minister Richard Shahan indicted

Richard Shahan, former children and families pastor of First Baptist Church, Birmingham, has been indicted in his wife's murder, according to media reports Oct. 23. He has been on house arrest since being released on \$100,000 bond in January.

The media reports cited court documents showing Shahan, 53, was indicted in August but the information wasn't made public until Oct. 22.

Karen Louise Shahan, 52, was found dead July 23, 2013, in the home the couple rented from First, Birmingham, where Richard Shahan had served since 2009. Shahan told police he was out of town visiting the couple's adult children during the time of the murder.

In August 2013 police held Shahan for 48 hours for questioning. Shahan was put on

administrative leave from the church that same month and resigned in December 2013, announcing plans to move overseas to serve three years as a missionary.

He was arrested New Year's Day 2014 at Nashville International Airport after a computer flagged his passport as a flight risk. A district attorney said at the Jan. 16 bond hearing that emails confiscated from Shahan's computer indicate that once out of the country he planned to move to the United Kingdom and marry his boyfriend, had said goodbye to his family and planned never to return to the United States.

Shahan waived a preliminary hearing in February because in Alabama all felony prosecutions must begin with an indictment by a grand jury. (BNG, TAB)

## Decatur Baptist to host 'Extreme Makeover'

It's not every day you can hear from Christian actor and author Nancy Stafford, worship with Point of Grace and laugh with Anita Renfro, Christian comedian, all in the same place. But that's what "Extreme Makeover" women's conference will offer to participants Nov. 15 at Decatur Baptist Church.

Doors will open at 8 a.m. and the conference will be from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Extreme Makeover" is sponsored by Tennessee Valley Pastoral Counseling (TVPC), a nonprofit ministry that provides Christian counseling services to residents in north Alabama.

To register for the conference, visit [www.tnvalleypc.org/conference.html](http://www.tnvalleypc.org/conference.html). To find out more about TVPC or to make a counseling appointment, visit [www.tnvalleypc.org](http://www.tnvalleypc.org) or call 256-224-8702. (TAB)

## Historical HIGHLIGHTS

FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



### 50 Years Ago October 1964

New Baptist Book Store: Construction began Oct. 1 on the new Baptist Book Store building located at 2020-2024 Eighth Ave. South in Birmingham, directly across the street from the offices of Birmingham Baptist Association. Expected completion date is June 1965. The store, one of 49 serving Southern Baptists, officially opened Feb. 15, 1927, in the educational building of First Baptist Church with Mrs. T.M. Floyd as manager. Currently located at 2011 Third Ave. North, the store's manager is Lafayette S. Horn.

### 40 Years Ago October 1974

Mission Becomes Church: Grassy Mission of Gilliam Springs Baptist Church, Arab, has been constituted into Calvary Heights Baptist Church. The mission has been sponsored by Gilliam Springs Baptist since 1969 and has experienced remarkable growth in all organizations and membership. Kenneth Hester is pastor of Gilliam Springs and Don Davis, who has served as pastor of the mission, has been called to serve as the first pastor of Calvary Heights Baptist.

### 30 Years Ago October 1984

New Director of Missions: Albert Olive McGill, former pastor of Rockford Baptist Church in Coosa County (Central Baptist Associa-

tion), is the new director of missions for Washington Association. He succeeds William H. Ponder, who served for 22 years.

### 20 Years Ago October 1994

Executive Director Chosen: Frances Dew Hamilton, of Trussville, has been elected executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, said commission chairman R.L. Guffin Jr. Hamilton, assistant professor of history at Samford University, has been interim executive director of the commission since November 1993. She succeeds John Loftis and is the first woman to serve as the head of any entity of the Alabama Baptist State Convention.

### 10 Years Ago October 2004

Couple Joins World Reach: Harvey and Sharon McCone, members of Green Valley Baptist Church, Hoover, joined the Birmingham-based international missions organization World Reach. Harvey McCone will serve as the group's international director of medical missions and physical relief. Sharon McCone will concentrate on mobilizing health-care students, women's groups and health-care professional organizations for medical missions. Prior to joining World Reach, Harvey McCone served with Baptist Health System as corporate director of Hispanic outreach. ☩

## Want to know GOD?

By Lee Barnett  
President, Legacy Christian University, Huntsville

One of my favorite stories from the Bible is that of the leper who asks if Jesus is willing to heal him (Luke 5:12-14). At first take it almost seems silly — why would Jesus not want to heal someone? Here was a guy with an incurable terminal disease that caused him to be separated from friends, family and even church and all he wanted was to be restored. I'm sure he longed to be reunited with loved ones and accepted in society. He probably also wanted to know he was valued and loved by God.

While most of us in the modern world will not contract leprosy we do have things in our lives that separate us from others and from God. Sometimes we think these issues, or sins, are simply too big for God to forgive.

We sometimes think we are too far gone for God to restore so why would He bother. Over the years I have heard many people say they have done "too many terrible things" for God to love them. "If you knew what I have done" is a common theme for many. Some feel they must "straighten out" their lives before God would love them but this story demonstrates something entirely different.

Jesus was moved with compassion by the leprosy man's request for healing and stated His willingness. We see this repeated in various stories where Jesus forgave sins openly. You see, we can't be clean until God cleanses us. We can't get past our sins until we let Jesus willingly forgive and restore us.

We all have hurts. We all want healing and restoration — physical, emotional and spiritual. Jesus is our loving and compassionate Savior and Healer. He is willing to heal us and forgive us of even the most undesirable sins. He is compassionate and willing to love on us if we simply ask and believe. Are you willing to believe? If so, just ask and He will be faithful and just to forgive (1 John 1:9). ☩

## 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:** Rehobeth Baptist Church is accepting resumés for a full-time pastor. Submit resumés electronically, [dfosterrbc@gmail.com](mailto:dfosterrbc@gmail.com), or to: 4444 South State Hwy 605, Rehobeth, AL 36301.

**PASTOR:** Chappell Hill Baptist Church in Gilbertown, Ala., located in rural Choctaw County, is seeking the full-time pastor that the Lord would have to serve here. Resumés may be sent by mail (Don Giles, 4447 Lusk Road, Gilbertown, AL 36908) or email ([dwgiles58@gmail.com](mailto:dwgiles58@gmail.com)).

**MUSIC MINISTER:** Fairfield Highlands Baptist Church is seeking a part-time music minister. Send resumés to: FFHBC, ATTN: Guy Sellers, 910 Ninth Street, Midfield, AL 35228, or email: [alsel2206@gmail.com](mailto:alsel2206@gmail.com).

**PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER:** Eldridge Baptist Church in Eldridge, Ala., is seeking a worship leader to lead our choir and congregation in a traditional/contemporary worship service. Respond to: [eldridgebaptistchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:eldridgebaptistchurch@yahoo.com).

**INTERIM MUSIC/WORSHIP LEADER:** Resumés should be sent to: Greensboro Baptist Church, ATTN: Music/Youth Search Committee, 908 Main Street, Greensboro, AL 36744, or

email to: [greensboro@bellsouth.net](mailto:greensboro@bellsouth.net).

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR/MINISTER OF YOUTH:** Calvary Baptist Church of Jesup, Ga., is currently receiving resumés for the position of full-time associate pastor/minister of youth. Please send resumés to: [secretary@cbcjesup.org](mailto:secretary@cbcjesup.org).

**STUDENT MINISTER:** Concord Baptist, Anderson, S.C., is seeking a student minister (grades 6-12). Degree required from an accredited seminary and minimum of three years church/ministry experience. Submit resumés via email to: [jjames@concordbaptist.com](mailto:jjames@concordbaptist.com) or to Concord Baptist, 1012 Concord Road, Anderson, SC 29621, ATTN: Dr. Don Cox. Church website: [concordbaptist.com](http://concordbaptist.com). Email: [jjames@concordbaptist.com](mailto:jjames@concordbaptist.com).

**YOUTH MINISTER:** Silver Run Baptist Church is actively seeking a part-time youth minister with a passion for Christ and youth. Please send resumés to: P.O. Box 8, Seale, AL 36875, ATTN: Andy Young, or email to: [andy.young@mww.com](mailto:andy.young@mww.com).

**MINISTER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES:** First Baptist Church of Foley, Ala., is accepting resumés for the full-time position of minister of children and families. Please email resumés to: [scollins@fbcfoley.com](mailto:scollins@fbcfoley.com).

### OTHER POSITIONS

**DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS:** The Winston Baptist Association in NW Alabama is currently accepting resumés for the position of director of missions. Acceptable candidates must have a history of involvement in associational missions and support for the Southern Baptist Convention. Resumés can be sent to: DOM Search Committee, P.O. Box 246, Double Springs, AL 35553.

**DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS:** The DeKalb Baptist Association in NE Alabama is currently accepting resumés for the position of director of missions. Acceptable candidates must have a history of involvement in associational missions and support for the Southern Baptist Convention. Resumés can be sent to: DOM Search Committee, 218 Parker Avenue SE, Rainsville, AL 35986, or email to: [dbasecretary@farmerstel.com](mailto:dbasecretary@farmerstel.com).

### BUSINESS

**CHURCH CARPET:** Church carpet tile \$.50 sq.ft. 100,000 sq.ft. flooring in stock. Ready to ship. \$.50 sq.ft. and up. [www.usacarpelandmattress.com](http://www.usacarpelandmattress.com). We ship nationwide. Located Prattville, Ala.

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vice 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](http://www.reliablesigns.com). 1-800-729-6844, 205-664-0955.

**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 205-942-0009 or [birmingham.al@covan.com](mailto:birmingham.al@covan.com).

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

### TRAVEL/VACATION

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

### MISCELLANEOUS

**JUDGEMENT DAY:** Evangelistic drama, Cottage Hill Baptist, Pleasant Grove, AL 35127. Oct. 25: 6-10 p.m.; Oct. 26: 6-9 p.m.; Oct. 27 and 28: no presentation; Oct. 29-31: 6-9 p.m. Reservations: 205-744-8521.

# Baptist NEWS BRIEFS

COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES

## 'Black Jesus' denounced; petition drive initiated

WASHINGTON — The Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC) has denounced the television comedy "Black Jesus" and is mobilizing members to join a petition drive asking network officials to take the program off the air.

The Washington-based PNBC said the program was "nothing short of blasphemous." The show airs on Adult Swim — a Turner Broadcasting System-owned cable network that shares channel space with the Cartoon Network.

"'Black Jesus' undermines the faith of the African-American community when our faith in Jesus is the only consistent source of empowerment that has brought us through centuries of enslavement, dehumanization and depersonalization," says a description of the PNBC's Cancel "Black Jesus" Campaign.

"Black Jesus," which just completed its first season, features Jesus Christ living in modern-day Compton, Calif., on a mission to spread love and kindness to a small group of followers. The show has received generally favorable reviews, but a plot line that includes growing marijuana in a community garden sparked controversy even before the series premiere Aug. 7.

The American Family Association said the show "completely misrepresents Jesus" and is intended to mock Christianity. One Million Moms oppose the show as well.

"Adult Swim is not ridiculing any other religion and wouldn't dream of mocking Muhammad or Muslims, but has no problem denigrating Christians," the group said in July.

The campaign urges church leaders and members to contact The Cartoon Network by email, Twitter, Facebook and a telephone comment line requesting the cancellation of "Black Jesus."

## Southwestern's Patterson affirmed by trustees

FORT WORTH, Texas — The trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, have affirmed the school's president, Paige Patterson, after investigating his decision to admit a Muslim student into the school's Ph.D. program.

Patterson, one of the most revered Southern Baptist figures and an architect of the conservative resurgence of the Southern Baptist Convention a generation ago, faced heavy criticism from some Baptists who accused him of violating the standards of his school.

"We join with our fellow Southern Baptists in appreciation for and admiration of the evangelistic heart of our president, Paige Patterson," the trustee board said in a statement Oct. 22 as it concluded its fall meeting. "Any violations of the seminary bylaws were done in a good-faith enthusiasm to pursue the seminary's purpose, as set forth in its articles of incorporation."

The trustees have closed their investigation, and Patterson said after the meeting the Muslim student, Ghassan Nagagreh, is no longer enrolled at the seminary.

All six Southern Baptist seminaries require students to demonstrate their evangelical belief: a profession of faith, a testimony that gives evidence of that faith, a church endorsement and three references that affirm their Christian character. ☞

# Fraudulent documentation

## Former missionary pleads guilty to wire fraud

Former Southern Baptist missionary Brady Nurse pleaded guilty Oct. 21 in a federal court to fraudulently obtaining approximately \$300,000 in missions funds over a period of five years while working as a logistics and business coordinator for the International Mission Board (IMB) in Portugal.

Nurse, 37, who resigned as a missionary in January, could face up to 20 years in prison, a fine of up to \$250,000 and an order to make full restitution of the money he took. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 21, 2015, by U.S. District Judge James R. Spencer.

Nurse and his wife, Andrea, were appointed IMB missionaries in March 2006. His wire fraud activity was discovered earlier this year by the IMB's internal auditing procedures. It was reported by the board's internal auditor and general counsel to the FBI, which began a months-long investigation resulting in federal charges against the Montana native. Nurse's plea agreement was announced Oct. 21 by Dana J. Boente, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia in Richmond, Va., and FBI special agent Adam S. Lee after it was accepted by U.S. Magistrate Judge David J. Novak.

Nurse admitted in a statement filed with his plea agreement that he obtained more than \$285,000 through 135 fraudulent reimbursement requests from 2008 to 2013 during his time in Portugal and after returning to the U.S.

In the statement, signed by Nurse and his attorney, he acknowledged that he "routinely altered" amounts on valid documents and invoices submitted on expense reports to increase his reimbursement; "submitted fraudulent, manufactured and/or duplicated documentation" on expense reports; "falsely represented" quotes and estimates for service from vendors as services actually provided, rather than the lower amounts actually charged; altered documentation associated with household shipping charges "to obtain additional benefit from an increased shipping allowance;" and falsely obtained reimbursement for nonreimbursable expenses.

After his resignation as a missionary, the statement added, Nurse continued to seek reimbursement for "suspect shipping expenses by false statements submitted to IMB through interstate emails." He also received nearly \$21,000 in additional funds through a clerical error by the board's benefits department and has yet to return those funds.

The IMB became aware in January of "suspicious transactions" by Nurse related to shipping of household items from Portugal to the U.S., according to the court document. IMB internal audit staff began a full-scale review of Nurse's reimbursement requests, comparing them with original documents obtained from Portugal. Results of the

internal review were reported to the FBI, which began an investigation.

In a statement, IMB general counsel Derek Gaubatz said, "We are deeply grieved that one sent out to proclaim the free gift of the gospel would violate the sacred trust placed in him by Southern Baptists. IMB believes it is appropriate that Mr. Nurse face accountability for his actions and fully supports his prosecution under federal law. At the same time IMB takes no joy in that prosecution. IMB is praying for Mr. Nurse and his family that they would experience the mercy of God in a fresh way.

"IMB is very thankful for its internal audit team that uncovered and put an end to the sophisticated methods used by Mr. Nurse to carry out his scheme. IMB has already put into place even more enhanced accountability measures to prevent similar schemes in the future. IMB takes its role as a steward over Southern Baptist resources given for missions very seriously. While both IMB's external auditors and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability have independently verified that IMB has robust anti-fraud measures in place, IMB will be seeking their input on any additional measures they would recommend.

"Finally IMB wishes to commend the special agents in the FBI and the professionalism of the U.S. attorney's office for their role in bringing resolution to this matter."

In an Oct. 22 message to all missionaries and staff, IMB executive vice president Clyde Meador asked for prayer for Nurse, his family and everyone affected by the case.

## 'Grievous harm'

"One of the members of our IMB personnel family has acted in such a way to cause grievous harm to the cause of Christ and furtherance of the gospel in the area where he served," Meador said. "It is one thing when someone sins and hurts himself, but when the individual takes advantage of the funds and the trust given to him by IMB, it seems much more damaging.

"When family hurts us deeply, a best first reaction is bathing our reaction to the hurt in prayer. God alone can comfort, provide wisdom and will guide your thoughts and words as you move forward in processing what has happened," Meador continued. "Please join us in holding this brother up in prayer. ... By allowing the federal government access to the facts we have acted in a biblical manner, and now there is a legal penalty to be paid. We know you will be praying with us for him and those he loves in the coming months and years."

IMB, Southern Baptists' denominational missions enterprise, has more than 4,800 missionaries serving worldwide.

Nurse now lives in Washington state, according to court records. (BP)



NURSE

**"When family hurts us deeply, a best first reaction is bathing our reaction to the hurt in prayer."**

Clyde Meador  
executive vice president, International Mission Board

## Christmas Village

An Alabama Tradition  
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November 5, 2014

VIP/No Stroller Day

November 6-9, 2014

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# Ministerial compensation

## Alabama pastors behind national average in pay, report finds

By **Bob Terry**  
The Alabama Baptist

**P**astors and other Baptist ministers are falling further behind in terms of financial support, according to a recently released report by the Layman's Salary Study Committee of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM).

The study, completed every two years, examined salaries, benefits and ministry expenses and reported results in groups organized by size of the church and church budget.

While salaries for full-time pastors rose 1.8 percent in Alabama during the past two years, that was less than half of the national inflation rate of 3.9 percent, the report noted. When increases do not keep pace with inflation, the pastor has less purchasing power to buy the same goods and services.

Other church staff members did not fare as well as pastors, the study found. Alabama ministerial staff saw mostly flat wages during the two-year period, according to the report. Nationally ministerial staff members saw increases that slightly exceed inflation.

### Ministerial benefits

In all benefits categories, Baptist ministers in Alabama trail their counterparts in other states. Full-time Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) pastors nationwide average 20 percent more in work-related benefits than do full-time pastors in Alabama. Bivocational pastors in Alabama trail their counterparts in other states by 30 percent on average in terms of work-related benefits.

For most the highest cost benefit is medical insurance followed closely by retirement contributions.

The Layman's Salary Study urged churches to separate ministry-related expenses from items counted as ministerial compensation. Expenses such as mileage reimbursement, convention costs, continuing education expenses and ministry-related hospitality

expenses should be in addition to compensation, the report stated.

The report also urged churches to consider a minister's total years of denominational service when determining vacation time or other paid leave.

"Pastor and staff should not be penalized for accepting God's call to your church," the report said. "Do not make him start over on (vacation time and sick leave) because God has called him to your church."

Churches also were urged to provide a Social Security offset for ordained ministers. Church employees pay a 7.65 percent Social Security rate. Self-employed ministers pay 15.3 percent or 7.65 percent more than nonminister employees. "This offset should be paid by the church and should not be part of a 'package,'" the report declared.



**The complete report may be obtained from the SBOM or by visiting [www.alsbom.org/ccs](http://www.alsbom.org/ccs).**

**"Pastor and staff should not be penalized for accepting God's call to your church. Do not make him start over on (vacation time and sick leave) because God has called him to your church."**

Layman's Salary Study Committee report by the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

Any Social Security offset is treated as a taxable income item for the minister.

The report also noted that churches should expect to pay more for a pastor with an accredited seminary degree than a nonseminary-trained minister. On average the report found that seminary graduates earned \$1,981 more.

The median percent of a church budget used for ministerial compensation and benefits was 48 percent, according to the report. When the middle majority — 70 percent of reporting churches — was examined (excluding the lowest and highest) the range varied between 36 percent and 58 percent of the budget. ☪

## RELIGION in America



Compiled from Wire Services

### Women leaders in nonprofits lag behind, study says

MONROVIA, Calif. — At an organization where 45 percent of United States senior leaders are women, Romanita Hairston's gender is mostly a nonissue as she oversees children's welfare programs at World Vision, the giant evangelical relief agency.

But in the larger evangelical universe high-ranking women like Hairston remain a relative rarity.

A new study by researchers at Gordon College in Wenham, Mass., and Wheaton College in Wheaton, Ill., has confirmed what many have long suspected — that many evangelical institutions lag far behind the general marketplace in leadership roles for women.

Looking at more than 1,400 evangelical organizations, researchers for the Women in Leadership National Study found that women held 21 percent of board positions, 19 percent of top-paid leadership roles and 16 percent of CEO posts in 2010.

In comparison women make up 43 percent of nonprofit boards and 40 percent of CEOs in the general marketplace.

### Christian groups bolstering help for immigrants

WASHINGTON — An alliance of evangelical organizations has pledged to dramatically increase the number of church-based legal clinics across the country to assist immigrants with the complicated processes of seeking green cards, visas and family unification.

The Immigration Alliance, a network of 15 evangelical denominations and ministries, launched a plan Oct. 21 to reduce the gap between the 22 million immigrant noncitizens and the 12,000 private immigration lawyers in the country.

"Churches are a trusted presence in immigrant communities that can — and should — help address this critical shortage of legal services," said Noel Castellanos, the alliance's board chair and the CEO of the Christian Community Development Association, in announcing the new venture. ☪

## REFLECTIONS

WHEN HENRY BECAME A MINISTER, THE LORD CALLED HIM OUT OF SHOW BUSINESS — BUT SOME SAY NOT FAR ENOUGH OUT OF IT.



### A Dying Child's Spiritual Legacy



By **Fred G. Womack**

Retired SBC pastor, Fred G. Womack, tells of his 6-year-old daughter's battle with cancer, his personal grief and how God granted unexpected and astonishing assistance through it all, such as the child's vision of heaven before her death. The book highlights that nothing short of God's supernatural comfort could produce solace and hope powerful enough to offset the unrelenting anguish that came in those days.

Books may be ordered online from [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), [Booksamillion.com](http://Booksamillion.com) or [WestBowPress.com](http://WestBowPress.com).



# Rashional thoughts

By Jennifer Davis Rash  
The Alabama Baptist

Executive editor • jrash@thealabamabaptist.org

## Disciple-making one step at a time

My entire house was spotless. I had cleaned and cleaned and cleaned. I even took each potted plant and cleaned its pot, freshened up its soil and wiped down each leaf individually.

Granted that isn't the way my house looks right now but there are moments when it definitely shines, and this was one of those times.

I tend to obsess about cleaning when I'm overly stressed or overwhelmed about projects or assignments that are weighing heavily on me. The closer the deadline comes for the project, the bigger and more impossible it seems. That's when I can only focus on cleaning.

It's actually kind of humorous to me how I will procrastinate on cleaning my house or organizing my office because both of those projects seem overwhelming at the time. It is only when I'm procrastinating on an even bigger project that I'm all of a sudden ready to tackle the cleaning project that should have already been done anyway.

I'm sure you have experienced those moments from time to time — staying busy working on something but not necessarily what should be priority at the time.

For instance, I'm writing this column several weeks ahead of the deadline, which is good in and of itself, but not the best idea because I set aside this time to write a paper for my Old Testament continuing education class at Samford's Ministry Training Institute. (Ahem, don't mention that part to our instructor, Dr. Norris.)

While there are likely as many different reasons for procrastination as there are different personality types who procrastinate, I know for me it comes down to discipline.

One of my mentors in my mid-20s (the late Eleanor Terry) taught me about backcasting and how to start with the end date of a project and work backward with small goals to achieve between now and then. Working on a project in bite-

size pieces is much more manageable and less stressful. It also keeps you focused so you are working efficiently and in proper order and allows for lots of moments of achievement rather than waiting for that one large moment that seems so impossible to reach. It also prevents the famous all-nighter so many of us have pulled more than once to meet a deadline.

The same concept can be applied to our Bible-reading plan. My pastor is currently challenging all of us at NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, to embrace that concept. We are calling it D-Life and wrapping it around the concept of living a full life of discipleship where we commit to becoming disciples who make disciples.

The idea is that we will join or start a discipleship group that meets weekly anywhere, anytime and follow a Bible-reading plan together — one chapter of the New Testament five days a week. Read the Scripture, meditate on what you read and jot down a few things that come to mind about what it said to you. Meet together with your group and discuss a set of study questions.

The goal is that each member of the group will eventually start his or her own discipleship group and continue the same routine, which means the members of the new group will eventually start his or her own group, and on it goes. A larger goal is that each person will develop and grow through the process, leading him or her to deeper studies of Scripture as well as expanded opportunities of service for the Kingdom. And the ultimate goal is that we learn to live out the gospel in all aspects of life, sharing with others as we go about our daily routines.

It's not the same as a life group or Sunday School class. It's strictly focused on reading the Scriptures together, growing in the Word and keeping each other accountable. And it's working — one chapter a day, one discussion a week, one group at a time. 🙌

# Rashional Extras...

Follow me on  
Twitter:

@RashionalThts

## Don't Be A Good Friend — Be An Extraordinary Friend

By Sam Day  
Director of Missions  
Tuscaloosa Baptist Association

A good friend helps someone in need — even when it is inconvenient. But my challenge for you is to take friendship to a whole new level. Go beyond being a good friend — be an extraordinary friend.

A good friend helps a friend in need. An extraordinary friend goes another step further by also taking them to Jesus. Isn't that the lesson we get from the story where the four men brought their paralytic friend to Jesus in Mark 12:1-12?

Keep in mind that your friends have a "felt need" and a "real need." The felt need of the man on the mat was that he was paralyzed. He wanted to walk. And that made him want to meet this Jesus who was changing lives. What is the "felt need" that your friends are experiencing that motivates them to meet our Jesus? Some are feeling lonely, helpless, depressed, hopeless, frazzled or even seeking a greater purpose in life. Share with them how Jesus

has met those same felt needs in your life so they will want to meet Him too.

The felt need of the paralytic man is what motivated him to meet Jesus. Next Jesus addressed his real need. The first thing Jesus told the man was, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Think about it — if Jesus had only healed and not forgiven the paralyzed man, how would the story end? The man would have walked out of that room excited, been able to walk for the rest of his life and at the end walked straight into hell. You too can be a good friend and help people take care of their felt needs by paying their light bill, comforting them in times of loss, praying for them to feel better, etc. That's good, but if the only thing you do is help ease their earthly suffering and never take them to Jesus to address their real need, then in the end they spend eternity suffering without God. Don't be a good friend who just helps people in need; be an extraordinary friend who also takes them to Jesus.

## Tips for staying balanced and disciplined with your work responsibilities

► Be a multitasker. Be able to switch gears quickly and focus on the specific task at hand while handling multiple projects at one time.

► Keep a to-do list and keep it up to date. Add to it as soon as a new project comes your way and delete items as soon as you are finished.

► Respond to emails and requests as quickly as possible. If it can be handled quickly, then go ahead and take care of it. If it can't, then put it on your to-do list. Don't mentally try to remember it.

► Put all your projects on a calendar. Alerts on your phone or computer are also good ways to have reminders.

► Stick to deadlines. If a deadline for a project isn't given to you, ask for one or create one for yourself and stick to it.

► Pace yourself. If you have a large project in the future that you know will be time consuming, create small deadlines for yourself and chip away at the project over time so that you are not overwhelmed at the last minute.

Lauren C. Grim  
Designer  
The Alabama Baptist

## How to live a life that counts

1. Be saved
2. Be surrendered
3. Be settled
4. Be Scripture-saturated
5. Be satisfied

Pastor Roger Graham  
Nazareth Baptist Church, Rainsville

"We didn't practice until we got it right. We practiced until we couldn't get it wrong."

Quarterback Blake Sims  
University of Alabama Crimson Tide  
Following the Oct. 18 Texas A&M shutout (59-0)

Share your tips for  
efficiency in life, work,  
Bible study, etc.

Email me at jrash@  
thealabamabaptist.org

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For November 2

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

### THE PERFECT OFFERING Hebrews 9:11-15

While many people will read these verses with a sense of foreignness, we need to remember God is progressively revealing Himself and His plan to redeem sinners as He guides history from one period to the next. Our verses today are relevant and we can learn much about our God who is rich in mercy.

#### Christ's Entry (11-12)

The writer of Hebrews sees himself in the time of transition from the old to the new. The old system of relating to God through ritual and sacrifice and priest is becoming obsolete and is ready to disappear. The new order has been inaugurated by Christ and is replacing the old. Very soon the temple in Jerusalem would be utterly destroyed and the entire priestly sacrificial system would be finished.

Jesus appeared as a High Priest of the good things that had come. These verses describe Jesus' ministry in heaven. Jesus' ministry did not deal with shadows and copies of reality as did the Aaronic priests who served in the tabernacle. Jesus ministered in heaven before God and secured our acceptance.

Jesus' redemptive work consisted of offering His own blood, not the blood of goats and calves. The blood of Jesus, our High Priest, was far more precious than the blood of animals. His was a once-and-for-all offering that never needed repeating. A single offering was eternally effective. Jesus secured our eternal redemption when He died on the cross. It was by the blood shed at the cross that we are able to enter heaven. All of Jesus' work for our salvation occurred at the cross, not subsequent to it.

#### Christ's Superior Sacrifice (13-14)

What happened when Old Testament worshippers offered sacrifices? These sacrifices sanctified the worshippers so they were outwardly clean. Goats and calves probably spoke of offerings occurring on the Day of

Atonement (Lev. 16:1-19). The ashes of a heifer spoke of an offering which provided purification to the ritually lean (Num. 19:1-10). These offerings were provisions for cleansing from fleshly defilement and provided temporary ceremonial purity. They could not give inner, spiritual cleansing. Only the blood of Christ could touch the conscience.

If the blood of animals can provide external cleaning how much more effective is the cleansing of Christ's blood? Three truths reveal the effectiveness of Christ's cleansing. First, Christ made the offering through the eternal Spirit. The Holy Spirit in some way aided Christ in making this offering to the Father. Second, Christ offered Himself. Christ voluntarily offered Himself and it represented an intelligent act of spiritual obedience to God. Third, Christ offered His unblemished character to God. Jesus responded in perfect moral purity. The sacrifice of Jesus was of infinite value.

Christ's sacrifice produces a cleansed conscience for those who trust Him as Lord. Animal sacrifices cannot remove sin, but Jesus can. This inner cleansing produced a new aim and vision. A transformed heart results in service and commitment to God.

#### Christ's Mediation (15)

Jesus secures forgiveness of sin. On the basis of giving Himself, Christ became a mediator of the new covenant and a ransom to free captives from their sin. The old covenant had no provision for removing offenses against God. In His death Christ removed the consequences of human sin for those who trust Him. The real cleansing from sin against God did not come from sacrificing animals but from the sacrifice of Christ.

These verses are relevant because there's one thing modern life, scientific progress, psychological theories and medical discoveries have not made the slightest advance in solving. And that is, "How can I, a sinner, come to God when I feel so dirty?" God Himself has solved that problem through the death, burial and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. ☩

## Bible Studies for Life By James Barnette, Ph.D. Samford University and Brookwood Baptist Church, Mountain Brook

### OVERCOMING BEING FORGOTTEN Genesis 39:21-23; 40:5-8, 20-23

#### Joseph Continued to Use His God-Given Abilities. (39:21-23)

Joseph has sunk a degree lower, from slave to prisoner. But he remains protected by God's presence and care, which gives Joseph the protection and assurance he needs. Joseph is not shielded from distress but he is protected with God's faithfulness and God's peace.

There are nine references to God in this chapter (v. 2, 3, 5, 9, 21 and 23). Four of them specify the Lord was with Joseph. Two passages occur where Joseph's future appears uncertain, even dismal. Although Joseph was without the support of his family (v. 2) and in prison (v. 21) the biblical record assures us Joseph has not been abandoned. God's presence is a hidden, working-behind-the-scenes kind of presence.

Verse 21 speaks of the God who shows steadfast love ("hesed" in Hebrew). This word does not simply connote God's divine loyalty but His acting in and through all events. This Hebraic understanding of God's active presence in events gains fuller expression in Romans 8:28 which reminds us that in all things God works for good.

#### Joseph Did Not Let His Circumstances Keep Him From Pointing to God. (40:5-8)

Here Joseph encounters two recently imprisoned, unnamed members of Pharaoh's kitchen — the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. These were important positions in Egypt. The chief cupbearer personally served wine to the pharaoh. Having committed unnamed offenses against Pharaoh (perhaps poisoning or suspicion of poisoning), they are detained in the captain of the guard's house where Joseph has been placed in charge of prisoners. Since they are in detention their futures have not yet been determined. Because they still have their status Joseph serves them

as he did Potiphar (Gen. 39:4). Joseph is obviously aware of their situation, which shapes his interpretation of their dreams.

Dreams are prominent and important in ancient Egyptian culture and literature. Furthermore the issue of dream interpretation was a crucial one in that day. The two servants are troubled by dreams they each have on the same night. Joseph urges them to tell him their dreams. Here a lowly foreign slave, whom the two prisoners had not dreamed of asking, is advising them to share the dreams with him. Joseph declares the interpretation of dreams is not a human art but a gift God can grant. In claiming this gift, Joseph is being a witness to the God who works in and through all things. The events of the future lay in God's hand only, and only the one to whom it is revealed is empowered to interpret. And in this case God works through the dreams of the nonchosen to develop the future of the chosen.

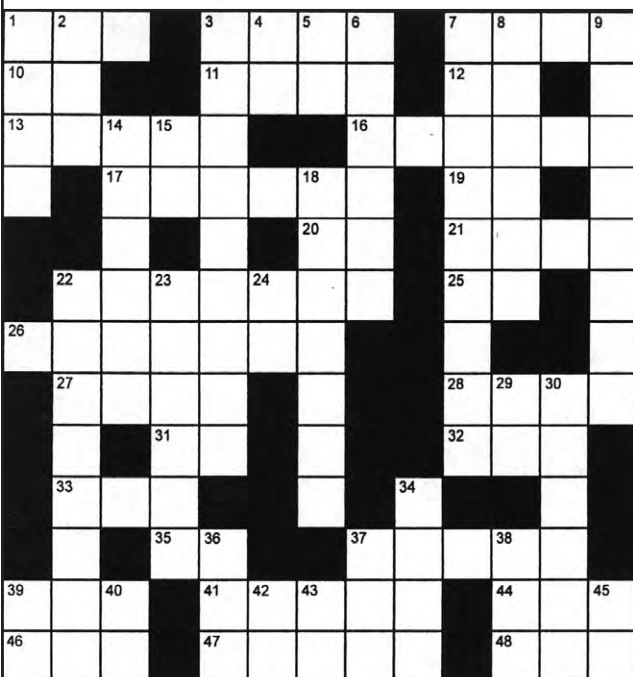
#### Ministry and Good Work is Not Always Immediately Rewarded or Noticed. (40:20-23)

The dreams are realized as Joseph had interpreted them and on the public occasion of Pharaoh's birthday. Often public decisions are announced on this annual occasion. The cupbearer and the baker have their heads lifted but in quite different ways: for one it means death and for the other life. The release of a prisoner on Pharaoh's birthday is a common practice in ancient Egypt. This historical fact is authenticated in ancient Egyptian records, in this case the Rosetta Stone, which first provided the clue to translating and understanding the ancient Egyptian language.

The cupbearer does not remember Joseph so he remains forgotten in prison. It will take two more years (Gen. 41:1) for human memory to be jogged. For now Joseph's future remains uncertain. Joseph's journey from slavery to freedom will take 13 years in all (Gen. 41:46). ☩

## Christian Crossword

By Susan F. Weimer Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.



### Across

- The \_\_\_ that covereth the inwards. (Lev. 3:3)
- Went to sojourn in the country of \_\_\_. (Ruth 1:1)
- Jehu destroyed \_\_\_ out of Israel. (2 Kings 10:28)
- He placed \_\_\_ the east of the garden. (Gen. 3:24)
- \_\_\_ also to save them to the uttermost. (Heb. 7:25)
- Associated Press. (abbr.)
- Nor height, nor \_\_\_, nor any other. (Rom. 8:39)
- The Lord sent \_\_\_ unto David. (2 Sam. 12:1)
- Unto \_\_\_ the prophet, the son of Amoz. (Isa. 37:2)
- Short for "hello."
- Bureau. (abbr.)
- Zimri, the son of \_\_\_, a prince. (Num. 25:14)
- He shall send them a

- \_\_\_ (Isa. 19:20)
- Her Highness. (abbr.)
- In thee shall all \_\_\_ be blessed. (Gal. 3:8)
- An eagle stirreth up her \_\_\_. (Deut. 32:11)
- Ye shall find the \_\_\_. (Luke 2:12)
- Hi in the mirror.
- Of fowls also of the \_\_\_. (Gen. 7:3)
- In addition, also.
- New Jersey. (abbr.)
- Nehemiah the son of \_\_\_. (Neh. 3:16)
- Not on.
- Being a wild \_\_\_ tree. (Rom. 11:17)
- Though they be \_\_\_ like crimson. (Isa. 1:18)
- Short for "good-bye."
- The name of it called \_\_\_. (Gen. 11:9)
- There was no room for them in the \_\_\_. (Luke 2:7)
- Down
- Shall the rich man \_\_\_ away. (James 1:11)
- Men \_\_\_ the bread of angels. (Ps. 78:25)
- The three and 20th to \_\_\_. (1 Chron. 25:30)
- Obadiah. (abbr.)
- Alabama. (abbr.)
- These are their names: \_\_\_ in the hill country. (1 Kings 4:8)
- David comforted \_\_\_ his wife. (2 Sam. 12:24)
- The son of a Benjamite. (1 Sam. 9:1)
- Heard them speak in his own \_\_\_. (Acts 2:6)
- \_\_\_ then went out unto them. (John 18:29)
- Tensile strength. (abbr.)
- Proud, \_\_\_, disobedient to their parents. (2 Tim. 3:2)
- \_\_\_ them through thy truth. (John 17:17)
- Seal up the \_\_\_ and prophecy. (Dan. 9:24)
- To be upon.
- Joshua had taken \_\_\_. (Josh. 10:1)
- Because of unbelief

- they were \_\_\_ off. (Rom. 11:20)
- \_\_\_ had six sons. (1 Chron. 9:44)
- These three men, Noah, Daniel and \_\_\_ were in it. (Ezek. 14:14)
- Avenue. (abbr.)
- I have called by name Bezaleel, the son of \_\_\_. (Ex. 31:2)
- Obstetrics. (abbr.)
- Chemical symbol for Iron.
- The sixth tone of the diatonic scale.
- Ibidem.
- Daniel. (abbr.)



## TOP 5

downloaded songs from iTunes

## CHRISTIAN &amp; GOSPEL



- 1. Greater**  
By MercyMe  
(Welcome to the New)



- 2. Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)**  
By Hillsong United  
(Zion — Deluxe Edition)



- 3. How Can It Be**  
By Lauren Daigle  
(How Can It Be)

- 4. He Knows My Name**  
By Francesca Battistelli  
(If We're Honest)

- 5. Overwhelmed**  
By Big Daddy Weave  
(Love Come to Life)

Source: iTunes at press time

## Movie extras needed

Have you always wanted to make your debut as a movie extra? Well here's your chance.

"Woodlawn," directed by the Erwin Brothers, retells the story of the 1973 Woodlawn High School football team and the spiritual awakening that most of the players experienced, along with then coach Tandy Gerelds. That spiritual awakening, according to legend, led to one of the biggest high school football games

in Alabama history when the Woodlawn Colonels battled the former L. Frazier Banks High School's Jets in 1974 at Legion Field with more than 42,000 people in the stands.

Extras are needed for scenes that include fans in the stands and fans cheering on the team. The scenes will be filmed Nov. 10 at 5 p.m. at the old Berry High School stadium located at 2826 Columbiana Road, Hoover, AL 35216. (TAB)

## Correction

The opening dates in Tuscaloosa and Bessemer theaters for the film "A Matter of Faith" listed in the article "Christian film focuses on evolution, creation" in the Oct. 23 issue of *The Alabama Baptist* were incorrect. The film will make it's way to the two cities Jan. 23, 2015.

## Media reviews



## Chasing Hope

Kathryn Cushman. Bloomington, Minn.: Bethany House, 2013. 314 pp. (Paperback).

The author of "Chasing Hope" is almost an Alabama girl, hailing from Lawrenceburg, Tenn., and graduating from Samford University in Birmingham. She now lives in Southern California, but we won't hold that against her ... except when it's 30 degrees here. I hadn't heard of her until someone suggested via a staff member of *The Alabama Baptist* that I look her up and review her latest book.

Thanks to whoever sent me that message. I have discovered a new fiction writer that I intend to follow. "Chasing Hope" is well written with a solid message embedded in the story. To quote from the author's blog, the book tackles "chronic illness, lost dreams and God's call on our lives." To quote from me, the appreciative reader, it approaches them in a way you don't often see in a Christian fiction book. The fact is we all face disappointment, even devastation. But God uses them, if we let Him, to direct us to where His will leads. It is refreshing to see the honesty of the story as the author shows the pain — both physical and emotional — of the main character.

I suppose this is considered "chick lit" — sorry guys. But for you chicks out there: if you haven't discovered Kathryn Cushman, look her up. If you have — why didn't you tell me earlier?



"I Was Raised a Jehovah's Witness," as you can imagine, is not intended to convince people to become "J.W.'s" as Hewitt calls them, but to raise awareness of how people are enticed to join an organization that teaches "false doctrines ... [that] are wiles of the devil and serve as a substitute for truth."

Author Joe B. Hewitt was raised a Jehovah's Witness because his mother was converted by visits from someone who knocked on their door when he was a young child and returned many times for "Bible study." He notes that the Jehovah's Witnesses were the only ones that reached out to his family even though there were many nearby churches.

The book is more than just a recounting of Hewitt's life, much of which was spent as a Baptist pastor. It deals with Jehovah's Witness teachings in great detail, pointing out the inaccuracies and inconsistencies and explaining how they are refuted in the Scriptures. In addition to being a good read, the book could serve as a helpful resource for anyone who has an opportunity to share with Jehovah's Witnesses.

## The Preacher

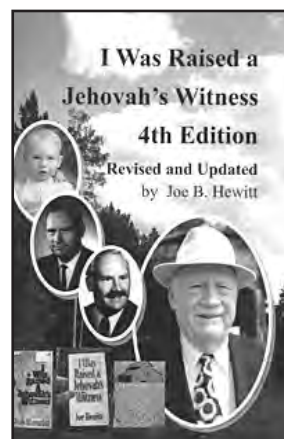
Chris Snider. Fayette: CreateSpace, 2013. 220 pp. (Paperback).

I recently sent in a review of a book written for female readers and, in the interest of fairness, I thought I would follow it with a book that will probably appeal more to a male audience.

"The Preacher" is a Christian fantasy set in the "near-Apocalyptic future." I'm not sure exactly what that means but I'll just accept it and move on.

The main character is Jacob Cross, the preacher, who is selected to wage war against Satan and his minions. Along the way, he joins with some other unlikely heroes who help him in his quest. The story is pretty bloody with lots of killing and horrifying creatures. Not quite my cup of tea, but an imaginative story that holds the interest of the reader. Of course it has strong Christian overtones. After all the preacher has to preach.

While the book would have benefited greatly from some professional editing, there is no doubt author Chris Snider can put together an interesting story. 📖



## I Was Raised a Jehovah's Witness (4th Edition)

Joe B. Hewitt. Fate, Texas: JBH Publishing, 2013. 223 pp. (Paperback).

I wasn't expecting much from this book. Uncreative title, four photos of the author on the cover — not a book I would pick up in the book store and read. Wanting to give the author a fair chance, however, I reluctantly began reading. Think you know where this is going? You probably do. The book was quite a surprise — well written, interesting ... just the opposite of what I thought it would be.

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If you have a book you would like reviewed, mail a copy to:  
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Graphic by Lauren C. Grim

# 'Planned genocide'

## Christian worship services attacked — 31 killed

**A**s reports of kidnappings, killings and persecution of Christians in Nigeria continue to build, some Nigerian leaders see the work of Muslim militants as a "planned genocide."

Armed militants stormed two churches in Taraba state in Nigeria on Oct. 19 and killed 31 people as they worshipped, a church leader said.

Two pastors, one pastor's son and 28 other Christians were slain in the attacks in the villages of Gindin Waya and Sondi, said Pastor Caleb Ahema, president of the Christian Reformed Church of Christ in Nigeria. Ahema said the onslaught was the seventh attack on Christian communities in the Wukari local government area since February.

"The attack on Christians in Taraba state is a planned genocide against Christians by Islamic insurgents who have invaded the southern part of the state, inhabited mostly by Christians," he said.

Ahema said the Muslim militants, who wore military uniforms, were members of the Islamic group Boko Haram who came from outside the state. Recently insurgents from Boko Haram, based in Borno state, have reportedly joined ethnic Fulani herdsmen in attacks on Christians in Taraba and other northeastern states.

Some recent attacks, according to Nigerian press reports, have been carried out by Fulani herdsmen who have become members of Boko Haram.

### Third attack on a Sunday

"This is the third time that the Muslims have attacked Christians on a Sunday," Ahema said. "The attack led to the death of four people in Gindin Waya, and 27 people in Sondi. Among the dead is the pastor of the Sondi church, Nuhu Useni, and his only male child."

Useni and the three other Christians slain in Sondi were buried Oct. 20, Ahema said.

Ahema said the killings have caused excruciating

pain for the Reformed Church in Nigeria, and he appealed for the Nigerian government to take steps to stop the blood bath.

Islamic militants with Boko Haram and others killed 1,631 Christians in Nigeria for their faith in the first six months of 2014 — a figure that is 91 percent of the total Christians killed (1,783) in the country in all of 2013, according to advocacy group Jubilee Campaign.

The increase in Christian deaths accompanies an increase in the total number of all people killed, mainly by Boko Haram — 4,099, which is 975 more than the total deaths from attacks by religious extremists for all of 2013.

Boko Haram also was responsible for kidnapping more than 200 schoolgirls from a school in Chibok area of Borno state in mid-April.

Although a cease-fire agreement reached Oct. 17 between the Nigerian army and the militant group seemed a hopeful indication of a quick release, the schoolgirls were still being held captive at press time.

And instead of releasing the girls, Boko Haram executed another large-scale kidnapping of dozens of women Oct. 23 in Adamawa state, according to reports.

While Boko Haram (translated as "Western education is a sin") is the moniker residents of Maiduguri, Borno state gave the insurgents, the group calls itself the "Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad," translated as "The Congregation of the People of Tradition for Proselytism and Jihad." The United States designated it as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in November 2013.

Christians make up 51.3 percent of Nigeria's population of 158.2 million, while Muslims account for 45 percent and live mainly in the north.

"The government with whom lies the onus to protect the lives and properties of the citizens as provided for in the constitution ... seems to have no interest in these killings and displacement of people, with attending sufferings by women and children especially," Ahema said. (MS, TAB)



PASTOR AHEMA

## PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



### Pakistani Christian mother faces death sentence

LAHORE, Pakistan — In spite of protests within Pakistan and abroad against the country's blasphemy laws, the Lahore High Court upheld the death sentence Oct. 16 for a Christian mother accused of insulting Islam's prophet, Muhammad.

Aasiya Noreen, known as Asia Bibi, is the first woman to be sentenced to death for blasphemy in Pakistan. Arrested in June 2009 after Muslim co-workers in a berry field 60 miles west of Lahore beat her when she refused to convert to Islam, her death sentence was announced in November 2010.

Bibi's husband, Ashiq Masih, said they were hoping for some relief but that the verdict had devastated the family.

Bibi's lawyer, Naeem Shakir, said Justice Anwarul Haq and Justice Shahbaz Ali Rizvi had rejected her appeal even though there were glaring contradictions in the witnesses' testimonies.

David Griffiths, Amnesty International's deputy Asia Pacific director, said, "The laws are often used to settle personal vendettas — both against members of minority religious groups and Muslims — while individuals facing charges are frequently targeted in mob violence. ... However, the blasphemy laws violate international law and must be repealed or reformed immediately to meet international standards."

### Sudanese Air Force bombs churches, villages

JUBA, South Sudan — The Sudanese Air Force dropped four bombs on an Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) complex in the Nuba Mountains of South Sudan on Oct. 10, church leaders said.

"The bombs have completely destroyed our church compound in Tabolo," said Youhana Yaqoub of the ECS in Al Atmor, near the Tabolo area in South Kordofan state. "A family living at the church compound miraculously escaped the attack, [but] their whole house and property were destroyed."

Sudanese Armed Forces supported by the Sudanese Air Force had destroyed the ECS church building in Al Atmor in a bombing July 6, sources said. In early October, Russian-made Antonov planes of the Sudan government bombed villages near Kuwalib in the Nuba Mountains but no injuries were reported, a Christian aid worker said.

Since the beginning of September, Sudan has dropped 19 bombs on South Kordofan villages where only civilians were present, Christian sources said.

### Kazakhstan faces UN Human Rights Committee review

ASTANA, Kazakhstan — The human rights record of Kazakhstan faced reviews by the United Nations Human Rights Committee on Oct. 30 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Nurlan Bizhanov, a deputy prosecutor of East Kazakhstan Region, warned local officials in mid-September about the "activity of nontraditional religious movements which is not declining," citing Grace Church, a Baptist church in the country, as "non-traditional." However, no definition of "traditional" or "non-traditional" religions appears to exist in Kazakhstan's published laws.

Bizhanov insisted that new forms and methods of countering religious activity by nontraditional religious movements need to be prepared and implemented. The instruction came in a secret mid-September letter.

### Church leaders in Iran arrested, imprisoned

ZABOL, Iran — House-church leader Behnam Irani has been sentenced, along with two other Christian leaders, to six years in prison for their involvement in house churches in Iran.

Irani, Abdolreza Ali-Haghejad and Reza Rabbani, all leaders in the Church of Iran, were sentenced Oct. 19 for "action against national security" and "creating a network to overthrow the system." Human rights groups claim the justifications for sentencing are catch-all terms the Islamist government uses to suppress Christians and political opponents it perceives as threats.

When the verdict was handed down, Irani was already serving the remainder of a prior five-year sentence for his involvement with house churches.

Irani won't be eligible for release until 2023, according to Middle East Concern. ☞