

# THE ALABAMA BAPTIST



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Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers remove a fallen tree from a home in Dothan.

Photo by Judy Gay

# SHOWING

## God's love in a practical way

### Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers respond to Houston County after storms

By Neisha Roberts  
The Alabama Baptist

**W**hen the local tornado sirens shriek and the National Weather Service's Emergency Alert System is activated, Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers prepare for service. And that's exactly what they did April 25 around 6 p.m. when severe thunderstorms and straight-line winds pushed through Houston County.

The storm caused widespread damage in and around Dothan, Cottonwood, Ashford, Columbia, Taylor and Rehobeth, leaving more than 30,000 people without power, roads blocked and trees on top of cars, houses and businesses. However, no serious injuries were reported.

Ken Farley, who has served as

Columbia Baptist Association's disaster relief coordinator for 14 years, said every disaster is different and it is never a "mundane job."

"This is the most damage we've had since Hurricane Opal (in 1995)," Farley said.

On April 29 he and Harold South-erland, Alabama Baptist Disaster

Relief District 5 coordinator, assessed areas in the south and south-east portion of the county.

By May 1, seven teams with volunteers from Columbia Association, Tuskegee Lee Baptist Association, Covington Baptist Association, Cleburne Baptist Association, Elmore (See 'Relief,' page 19)

### Alabama Senate to review bill calling for lottery, casino gambling

By Carrie Brown McWhorter  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**A**labama legislators are looking to gambling once again as a fix for the state's financial woes, and this time the proposal is coming from those who have traditionally opposed legalized gambling in the state.

The news came in an April 27 press conference held by Republican state Sen. Del Marsh, president

pro tempore of the Alabama Senate, at the State House. Marsh said the potential impacts of expanding gambling in Alabama are too significant to ignore.

"At a time when we are talking about either massive budget cuts or higher taxes, this is certainly something we need to take a look at and consider," Marsh said.

Marsh was referring to the "Assessment of Lottery and Gaming

Programs Across the U.S. April 2015," an economic analysis of the impact of state-sponsored gambling conducted by the Institute for Accountability and Government Efficiency at Auburn University at Montgomery, at Marsh's request.

The assessment examined lotteries in Alabama's border states and around the U.S. It also profiled states that have entered into casino- (See 'We have to be,' page 4)

# COMMENT

## For Mothers, Fathers and All Others

**O**n the last night Jesus spent with His disciples He gave them a new commandment. In John 13:34, Jesus said, “A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you so you must love one another.”

Earlier in His ministry Jesus had emphasized loving one’s neighbor through the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Jesus even taught people should love their enemies (Matt. 5:44). But in these last hours, Jesus focused attention on loving the fellowship.

So important was love of the fellowship that Jesus said it would be an identifying mark for all to know that one was a Jesus-follower.

Jesus even told the disciples the kind of love they were to have for one another. It was not a sentimental kind of love. Nor was it the love of friendship. Jesus said, “As I have loved you so you must love one another.” It was “agape” love.

### Love of Christ

Years later the apostle John expanded on this commandment when he wrote, “This is how we know what love is, Jesus Christ laid down His life for us” (1 John 3:16). John also challenged, “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth” (v. 18). Christians ought to lay down their lives for one another, he wrote (v. 16).

The words of Jesus recorded by John and the apostle’s later commentary on those words were directed toward the Church. Yet they have equal application to the Christian home. They provide guidance to mothers, fathers, children, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles — all who are part of a Christian family.

The family is held together by self-giving love. One can say all the emotionally laden platitudes possible but unless the words are validated by actions of service and self-sacrifice, the words are like a “resounding gong or a clanging cymbal” — just noise (1 Cor. 13:1).

John’s commentary makes that point. “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” asks John (v. 17). The application to the family is unmistakable.



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

Christian families founded on the love of God demonstrate their love through self-sacrificing service to one another.

Mothers and fathers know about self-sacrificing service. They give up time, sleep, hobbies, personal preferences, opportunities, food and more for children. They run households, attend meetings, meet with teachers, prepare meals and countless other tasks. They labor to provide shelter and security.

Grandparents — even great-grandparents — sometimes help with these tasks. So do extended family members.

Family members are there to help with skinned knees or broken limbs or debilitating disease. They are there to support amid all the traumas of growing up and growing old — the bruised egos, the broken hearts, the physical pains, the confusion and emotional distresses.

Being part of a Christian family is not easy. It takes a lot of stamina, a lot of endurance, a lot of Christ-like love.

Mothers may face the greatest challenge. In this era of both parents working outside the home and spouses sharing household chores, women still do more work than men.

A study of developed countries by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development found that in the United States, men spend more time working outside the home than women — an average of one hour and six minutes more.

When unpaid work — what some call the “second shift” — is added, women far outdis-

tance men. The biggest gap involves child care and cleaning.

A sad commentary on the status of men in the U.S. was the finding that in cases where the mother worked outside the home and the man did not, the woman still devoted about 50 percent more time to child care than the nonworking father.

Honestly it is hard to see how Christ-like love can be at play in such situations. “Agape” love refuses to be guided by personal interest or advantage. A Christ-like love seeks the other’s good.

The apostle Paul addressed this issue in Philippians 2:3 when he wrote, “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility consider others better than yourself.”

Greeks of that day had trouble with the idea of humility and service. To them such traits showed weakness. They were marks of a slave, not a free man.

Evidently that type of thinking still exists in some quarters where selfish ambition, vain conceit, power and pride are more important than Christian love.

In the Philippians passage Paul called for believers to be like-minded (v. 2). That is a popular term in the letter where it is used 10 times. The term refers to a “comprehensive outlook which affects the attitude.” Today it might be called a worldview.

The apostle is not advocating identical lifestyles or sameness in personalities. He is pleading for the Philippian community to embrace common values and common love. Negatively that would rule out selfish ambition because selfish ambition focuses on the individual. Positively it would reinforce considering others because humility looks after the interest of others.

### ‘One in Spirit and in purpose’

The Philippian Christians had been made “one” by the work of grace in their lives and were to be “one in Spirit and in purpose” (v. 2). They were partners with the Spirit of God and with each other. That partnership was lived out in self-giving love modeled by Christ’s giving of Himself on the cross.

What a wonderful example for the Christian family: a like-minded family — a family united in Christ and one in values and love. There the needs of others become more important than personal desires. There the needs of the family take precedent over the desires of the one.

There, as the apostle Paul wrote, selfishness gives way to the needs of others and egotism is replaced by humility. For the Church and for the home Jesus’ command is equally applicable, “Love one another as I have loved you.” That is a command good for mothers, fathers and all others. 🙏





"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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IMB photo

Afraid to return to their homes after aftershocks hit the area following an earthquake April 25, residents of Kathmandu stay in temporary shelters.

# 'Light of HOPE'

## Southern Baptists respond to Nepal after devastating earthquake

**R**eaching as far as Bangladesh, India and Tibet, the magnitude-7.8 earthquake that hit 50 miles outside of Kathmandu, Nepal, on April 25 brought with it widespread death, destruction, panic and urgent need.

The earthquake was the strongest in the region in more than 80 years, and at press time the death toll climbed to more than 6,200, with more than 13,900 injured — but that's not including numbers from unreachable rural areas. There also were still thousands unaccounted for.

At least seven Christian church buildings were destroyed or severely damaged in Nepal and at press time more than 500 Christians were estimated to have died in the earthquake.

Aftershocks continued to rock the area for several days after the quake. The largest hit the afternoon of April 26, and registered at magnitude-6.7. It caused panic and fear for thousands of locals and tourists packing the streets and open fields of the capital city of Kathmandu.

### More than 110 aftershocks

Government officials advised everyone to stay outside until their homes and buildings could be checked. At press time, there had been more than 110 aftershocks measuring above magnitude 4.

The first response by Baptist Global Response (BGR), the Southern Baptist humanitar-

ian organization, included basic survival needs like water, shelter, food and health care. BGR also released \$50,000 for initial relief efforts.

However, instead of "instant" aid reaching people, roads were blocked by landslides or were completely crumbled, which slowed relief efforts to areas outside the city.

An international Christian worker in Nepal said finding food — any kind of food — and drinking water are top priorities.

Another international Christian worker, Bekah Rivers, who survived the earthquake, said, "When you are in crisis mode, the schedule goes out the window. The daytime is for making sure gas tanks are filled; there is food for everyone; water is pumped while we have limited electricity; and whether people have shelter. ... We are living in community now. We are all here to help one another."

Evert Swinson, also an international Christian worker, explained that if there is going to be an impact in Nepal for the Kingdom, then it's going to be through efforts like this

— living in community and through local Christians and churches.

"I can't imagine an organization more strategically prepared to respond. They [BGR] are a trusted partner for us," Swinson said.

Phase two of BGR's relief plan began April 27 when BGR representatives arrived in Kathmandu to start assessments of damage and to see how relief workers can make the biggest impact.

Rivers said, "Meeting with BGR and developing a plan for the next few days and even weeks ahead is like a light of hope. We are thankful for people who can come in and think clearly about a plan of action when we are just trying

to live through the crisis ourselves."

Francis Horton, BGR area director for Central and South Asia, requested a Disaster Assessment and Response Team (DART) that landed in Nepal at the beginning of May and planned to spend the week assessing needs.

Horton said a coalition launched among local churches in Nepal and appointed representatives to a disaster relief committee. Many of (See 'Physical,' page 18)

**To learn more,  
visit [gobgr.org](http://gobgr.org).**

**To assist in the Nepal  
earthquake aftermath, send  
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State Board of Missions, P.O.  
Box 11870, Montgomery, AL  
36111. Mark "Earthquake  
Relief" on the check.**

# 'We have to be good stewards'

## More gambling is a recipe for continued economic stagnation, expert says

(continued from page 1)

style gaming compacts with American Indian tribes. The analysis included a look at revenue generated, prizes awarded, administrative costs and proceeds available to the states.

In the report researchers estimated that a state-run lottery system could generate up to \$331 million annually for the state's general fund. They also estimated that casino-style gambling, specifically the addition of gaming tables and slot machines at Alabama's four greyhound tracks in Birmingham, Mobile, Macon County and Greene County, could produce around \$74 million in state and local taxes that would be paid on casino revenue. Finally the researchers estimated that expanding legal gambling in the state could create more than 10,000 new jobs, jobs that Marsh said will "positively impact families throughout our state."

An expansion of gambling is commonly seen as one way to increase revenue without raising taxes, but that line of reasoning, according to John W. Kindt, "couldn't be further from what reams of research tell us about the true costs of gambling." Kindt is professor emeritus of business administration at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Ill., and author of the 2013 book "The Gambling Threat to World Public Order and Stability: Internet Gambling," the fourth in a series of books on Internet gambling.

According to Kindt, more gambling is a recipe for continued economic stagnation.

### Defeating the bill

"When you increase the opportunities to gamble you're creating more social problems, which likewise strain taxpayer dollars," he said. "You're also draining jobs away from the consumer economy. All of that money that could be used to buy big-ticket consumer goods — cars, appliances and electronics, for example — is being flushed down slot machines, video poker machines and, increasingly, the legal gray-area of Internet gambling. More blackjack tables and more roulette wheels don't create jobs. They are job killers that also destroy the communities they're located in."

Marsh's press conference came after weeks of speculation about the effects of proposed cuts in state services and predictions that most of Alabama's state parks would close May 1, and legislators wasted no time in moving forward.

On April 28, Marsh told *The Montgomery Advertiser* that Senate Republicans had given him approval to draft the bill, not-

ing that a few members of the caucus were "adamantly opposed."

On April 30, Marsh released a draft of the proposed bill that included the following provisions:

- ▶ To establish an Alabama Lottery and the Alabama Lottery Corporation
- ▶ To authorize and regulate gaming at the four existing racetracks

- ▶ To levy a state gross receipts tax and a local gross receipts tax on gaming revenue of the racetracks

- ▶ To levy a tax on vendors of gaming equipment
- ▶ To provide for the disposition of lottery proceeds and state gaming tax proceeds

- ▶ To create the Alabama Lottery and Gaming Commission to implement, regulate, and administer gaming and regulate and supervise the Alabama Lottery and Alabama Lottery Corporation
- ▶ To authorize the governor to negotiate a compact for gaming with Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PCI)

The bill also called for a Sept. 15 vote on the amendment.

Republicans in Alabama have traditionally opposed efforts to legalize gambling in the state. Another prominent Alabama Republican, Gov. Robert Bentley, disagrees with Marsh's approach to the budget crisis.

In a phone interview April 30 the governor said he was "totally opposed" to any bill that would expand gambling in the state. Alabama needs to approach its current and future budget needs the "right" way, he said.

"You do it right by paying your debts, finding the money that is necessary through fair revenue and fair taxes, and by asking individuals to pay a small amount on certain things like automobiles and cigarettes and asking huge corporations to pay their share."

That is not to say Bentley will oppose a lottery vote if Marsh's bill makes it through the Legislature.

"I don't believe gambling is the way we should go about this, but I have to look at it from the people's perspective,"

Bentley said. "I believe in the people's right to vote."

During the 2014 gubernatorial election Bentley said his own polling showed overwhelming support for a lottery among Democrats and Republicans in the state. At that time Bentley said about three-fourths of Alabamians and more than half of Republicans wanted

another chance to vote on a state lottery. A vote held in 1999 failed by a 54-46 margin after religious groups, including Alabama Citizens Action Program (ALCAP), actively campaigned against it.

ALCAP Executive Director Joe Godfrey takes issue with elected officials who want to pass the decision back to the voters.

"We have already voted," Godfrey said. "We live in a representative republic. We voted on these house members and senators to go to Montgomery to represent the

people of Alabama. If they can't make decisions, then let us vote on the budget and every other issue. We won't need a legislature."

Godfrey also is concerned about the haste at which gambling proposals are being introduced, especially since a lawsuit brought by Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange is still pending in the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals. The state's suit in Alabama v. PCI Gaming Authority asks the court to decide whether casinos operated by the Poarch Creeks in Wetumpka, Montgomery and Atmore are in fact operating on federal trust land.

The case also asks the court to interpret whether the

**"When you increase the opportunities to gamble you're creating more social problems."**

**John W. Kindt  
professor emeritus  
University of Illinois**



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state has authority on tribal lands to enforce a 2014 Alabama Supreme Court ruling that found that electronic bingo machines do not meet the definition of bingo games and are therefore illegal in Alabama.

Strange's suit calls into question the status of the Poarch Creeks, who were not federally recognized as a tribe until 1984. In a previous case, *Carcieri v. Salazar*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that tribes recognized after 1934 do not qualify under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act passed in 1988.

### 'Let the courts decide'

A compact between the Poarch Creeks and the state would make the lawsuit a moot point, Godfrey said. A decision in favor of the state would allow Strange to shut down operations at all tribal casinos.

"We need to wait and let the courts decide," Godfrey said. "That takes time, but once they decide that case we can make a decision. But we should not circumvent the federal courts on this issue."

Godfrey said Alabama Baptists and other concerned citizens should call and email their representatives in the state House and Senate as soon as possible and respectfully ask them to oppose all pro-gambling legislation, including a pre-emptive compact with the Poarch Creeks, which he believes would be a step in the wrong direction.

"That will just open the door for more gambling too. They will always be expanding, always wanting more," he said.

For his part, the governor said the issue is more about long-term solutions than short-term fixes.

"We have to be good stewards of the people's money.

I don't want us to go down the path of some states believing that gambling will solve our problems."

## Lotteries one of the biggest public policy failures, Godfrey says

By Joe Godfrey  
Executive director, Alabama Citizen's Action Program

Pro-gambling and pro-lottery forces are pushing Alabama once again to legalize gambling. What is different this time is that some conservative Republican legislators are "cozying up" to the idea. Republican Senate leader Del Marsh recently announced he preferred legalizing lottery gambling to raising taxes similar to what Gov. Robert Bentley has proposed.

What this legislator and others need to realize is that lotteries have proven to be one of the biggest public policy failures of the last 40 years. *The Arkansas News* recently reported: "State lawmakers got a sobering picture ... of the Academic Challenge Scholarship's future as proceeds from the Arkansas Scholarship Lottery, which funds the scholarship, dwindle in the face of declining ticket sales."

Legislators also should recognize that a lottery is a tax. In fact it is the worst kind of tax for two reasons. First it is a regressive tax on the poorest citizens of our state. A careful analysis of data from states that currently have a lottery indicate that upper- and middle-income citizens do not play the lottery on a regular basis. Their purchases of lottery tickets would not provide the level of income to the state touted by the pro-gambling forces. The "real" money spent on lottery tickets comes from lower-income individuals and families who do not always understand that they are far more likely to lose than to win.

### Tricking citizens

That brings us to the second reason a lottery is the worst kind of tax. For a lottery to bring in the revenue needed by the state, the state actually has to deceive its own citizens in order to get them to purchase large numbers of lottery tickets. The state becomes a "bookie" and spends great sums of money on expensive, creative, attractive and often humorous advertising in order to trick its citizens into paying for a little

card with numbers on it, most of which are thrown into the trash can after one or two winners are announced.

The state, which is set up to protect its citizens from "enemies, both domestic and foreign," actually becomes an enemy of its own citizens, deceiving them into throwing away their hard-earned money on mostly worthless lottery tickets.



GODFREY

There is another fact that should be mentioned at this point: Money spent on lottery tickets cannot be used to pay for legitimate goods and services. Thus, the general tax base from sales taxes drops and the overall economy suffers. If gambling (whether through a lottery or through casino gambling) solved all the economic woes of a community or a state, then why are so many counties and states, where gambling is a central part of their economy, struggling?

Nationwide, two-thirds of the citizens never or rarely gamble. As a result, they are apathetic to the problems associated with gambling and will often argue, "Well, since I don't gamble, if someone wants to do so, who am I to stop them?" Those individuals need to understand that "you pay even if you don't play." All of the big predatory gambling states (Illinois, New Jersey, New York, etc.) are in a mess financially. Why? In a 2009 report by the Rockefeller Institute on Government it was concluded that predatory gambling exacerbates long-term budgetary problems for states.

We appeal to the Alabama Legislature to resist the temptation to fund the important and admirable work done by our state and local government employees and the services they provide (from teachers to clerks to judges to law-enforcement officers to first responders) with money deceptively taken from the pockets of unsuspecting citizens. Instead we call for a continued reduction in wasteful spending and, when necessary, a restructuring of the Alabama tax code that will result in taxes that are fair and understandable, rather than based on trickery. (al.com, TAB)

For more information on how predatory gambling is a failed government policy, and to support some of the claims made in this editorial, visit the Stop Predatory Gambling website at <http://stoppredatorygambling.org/blog/category/blog/>.

# 'My concern is for people'

## Alabama Gov. Bentley wants to limit expansion of gambling, but says an agreement may be the answer

By Carrie Brown McWhorter  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley does not believe increased gambling will help the state's ailing budget, but he does think an agreement with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians may be the state's best bet for limiting the expansion of gambling.

"Even though I'm not for gambling, a compact, if done correctly, would help us keep gambling where it is now," Bentley said in an April 30 telephone interview. "A compact could help us limit expansion [and avoid] Las Vegas-style gambling, like table games and full-fledged slots."

The governor's comments came in a week that saw the president pro tem of the state Senate, Del Marsch, propose a massive expansion of gambling and a representative of the Poarch Creeks offer \$250 million to the state's General Fund (GF) in exchange for exclusive gambling rights.

### Repaying debt

The financial challenge before legislators is to create a budget that not only funds existing needs but also repays debts the state incurred when previous leaders borrowed from the state's Rainy Day Fund. Repaying the debt has been a priority of Bentley's administration, but the payments cut into what is already a tight budget.

"We have a problem with our budgets, and we need to raise more revenue," Bentley said. "It's hard for a conservative Republican to say this, but the only way to raise revenue is through fair taxes."

Marsh and others disagree, however. Legislators have largely ignored the governor's requested tax increases, which he projected would raise \$541 million for the GF. Instead legislators have focused on additional cuts to state programs, such as those for children and law enforcement, and closure of facilities, including several Alabama state parks. Legislators also have proposed creating a state lottery and allowing casino-style gambling at Alabama's four existing greyhound tracks as alternatives to the governor's plan.

Bentley said that while he is "totally opposed" to the massive expansion of gambling Marsh is proposing, he believes an agreement with the Poarch Creeks might help the state budget and keep gambling at its current levels in the state.

However, the governor said he is only willing to consider an agreement if state legislators first agree to raise the \$541 million through the revenue increases he proposed in February.

"That's how much we need to really help our budgeting process for years to come," Bentley said. "I do not want the Legislature to think that a compact is going to solve our problems. It will not."

The state's budgeting problem will become a reality Oct. 1 and any agreement with the Poarch Creeks would take time, Bentley said. While the governor does have the authority to enter into an agreement with an Indian tribe without legislative approval or a majority vote, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior must concur with the agreement. Bentley estimates no money would be available from such an agreement for 1-3 years and even then, he said, the

## Panel discussion on pros, cons of state lottery

Les Bernal, national director of Stop Predatory Gambling, will be part of a town hall-style panel discussion hosted by WPMI, Local 15, the NBC-television affiliate in Mobile, about the possibility of a lottery in Alabama.

A group of panelists, including Bernal, Rep. Craig Ford (D-Gadsden) and senior research analyst for the Alabama Policy Institute, John Hill, will debate the positives and negatives of implementing a lottery and the success and failures in other states. Members of the studio audience will have an opportunity to participate in the conversation.

You can take part in the conversation by being a member of the studio audience. The town hall is May 7 at 7 p.m. at the Alabama School of Math and Science. The meeting is scheduled to be livestreamed. (TAB)

Visit [www.local15tv.com](http://www.local15tv.com)  
for more details.

amount would depend on what was negotiated and approved with the tribe.

Bentley said he has not met with tribal leaders of the Poarch Creeks, though members of his legal staff have. As far as the reported \$250 million offer from the Poarch Creeks, Bentley said the amount would not be enough.

"Even if they gave \$250 million up front and a percentage thereafter, that would be far short of what our needs are," the governor said.

Financial gain is only one side of the equation when it comes to gambling, and as a Christian and a Baptist, Gov. Bentley takes the other side — the moral side — very seriously as well.

"As far as my faith is concerned, my concern is for people. I believe I was placed here for a purpose. I'm here to solve problems, and that's what we've tried to do since we took office," Bentley said. "I believe that gambling hurts people and hurts families. It really attacks the poor. People think that they are going to get something for nothing, and you don't get something for nothing."

### 'Never a clean endeavor'

Corruption also is a concern.

"With widespread gambling, you pay a price. It's never a clean endeavor, which is one reason why I just don't think we ought to fund government with gambling," he said.

Ultimately Bentley said his vision is for a better Alabama where children receive a good education, people have jobs and family structures are in place.

"We can always do better, but we've got a great state," he said. "I don't want it to change except to do better." ■

# Limiting gambling

## Could Alabama benefit from a compact with PCI?

By Carrie Brown McWhorter  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The word “casino” conjures up images of Las Vegas-style glitz and glamour, and Alabama’s Wind Creek Casino and Hotel in Wetumpka certainly strives for that feel. For example in April 2014 the casino debuted an impressive 16,000-gallon shark tank built and featured by the Animal Planet TV show “Tanked.”

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PCI) who operate Wind Creek, as well as casinos in Montgomery and Atmore, have a lot to gain if they enter into a compact with the state of Alabama to share revenue from its facilities. They also have a lot to lose if a case currently on appeal to the 11th Circuit Court is decided in favor of the state of Alabama.

The Poarch Creeks are the only Native American tribe in Alabama recognized by the federal government. Within their three casinos, rows of arcade-like machines light up, music plays throughout the cavernous room and bells ring to signal winners. While operators claim gamblers are playing electronic bingo, gambling opponents argue the machines are really slot machines.

### Definition of bingo

In November 2014 the Alabama Supreme Court ruled bingo-like games played on electronic or computerized machines do not meet the accepted definition of bingo, thus making the machines that fill PCI casinos illegal under state law.

However, the tribal casinos claim they are not bound by state law, but instead fall under the provisions of the 1998 Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), a federal law that establishes a framework for allowing gambling on American Indian lands.

Under IGRA, American Indian tribes are the chief regulators of Class II gambling, primarily consisting of bingo, whether on

paper cards or electronic machines. Class III gambling, which includes slot machines, blackjack, craps and roulette, can only occur when such gambling is legal in the state in which the tribe is located and if the tribe and state have negotiated a compact that has been approved by the U.S. Secretary of the Department of the Interior.

Alabama has no compact with the Poarch Creeks, though Gov. Robert Bentley has expressed his willingness to consider such an agreement. As governor, Bentley has the authority to enter into an agreement with the PCI, the conditions of which would depend on the terms negotiated by both parties. No vote would be required by either voters or the Legislature, though the agreement would require approval by the Secretary of the Interior.

In an April 30 interview Bentley expressed his desire to limit gambling to what is already in place, which he said could be accomplished by a compact (see story, right).

However, Alabama Citizens Action Program Executive Director Joe Godfrey would like to see all forms of gambling made illegal in the state, which he believes could happen if the governor and the Legislature wait until a ruling is issued in *Alabama v. PCI Gaming Authority*, the case brought by Attorney General Luther Strange on behalf of the state that is currently on appeal to the 11th Circuit Court. That case could find that the Poarch Creeks should not be governed by IGRA and thus are subject to state law. Such a ruling would shut down electronic bingo statewide, Godfrey said.

“The Poarch Creeks stand to gain a whole lot if a compact gets signed,” Godfrey said.

Godfrey added that an exclusive agreement with the Poarch Creeks could shut down gambling at Alabama’s four greyhound tracks as well but would probably lead to more battles between the state and nontribal gambling interests.

“They will want to protect their interests, too,” Godfrey said. ☞

### Who regulates Indian gambling?

American Indian tribes are the primary regulators of Class II gambling. Regulation of Class III gambling may be addressed in the Tribal-State compacts and varies by state with the tribes remaining the primary regulator in most states. Both Class II and Class III gambling are subject to the provisions of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act and oversight by the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

### What process must a tribe follow to operate a gambling facility?

The tribe must determine whether the state in which the gambling facility is to be located permits such gambling. If the state permits gambling by any person, organization or entity, then tribes are allowed to conduct Class II gambling activities without state approval. If the tribe wishes to conduct Class III gambling, a Tribal-State compact must be negotiated.

American Indian gambling must be conducted on American Indian lands within a tribe’s jurisdiction. American Indian lands are defined as all lands within the limits of any American Indian reservation and any land’s title which is either held in trust by the United States for the benefit of any American Indian tribe or individual or held by any American Indian tribe or individual subject to restriction by the United States against alienation and over which an American Indian tribe exercises government power.

The tribe must submit a tribal gambling ordinance to NIGC. The ordinance must provide, among other things, that: (1) the tribe will have the sole proprietary interest and responsibility for conducting gambling, (2) net revenues will be used for specific purposes, (3) annual outside audits will be conducted and (4) a process for licensing and conducting background checks is in place. The NIGC chairman must approve an ordinance before gambling can occur.

Source: National Indian Gaming Commission

## Ministry Tips



### CHURCHES ARE DIFFERENT

By Jesse Reeder

Pastor, Moulton Baptist Church

I have had the wonderful blessing of serving the Lord and His people in three different churches in three different states.

One truth I have discovered in leading churches is that they are all different.

“For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body.” (1 Cor. 12:12).

#### Individual believers

We tend to think of this verse solely on the basis of individual believers. This verse also has a collective aspect as we

think about all the local churches being a part of the larger collective body of Christ that includes all believers.

This is why as leaders in a church we must stay in close relationship with Jesus.

He is the Head of our church just like He is the Head of all Christian churches and He alone must lead us as a church.

Understand that we, as pastors, have a

unique path to follow and a ministry to perform in fulfilling the calling that Christ has for our church.

#### Resist temptation

Resist the temptation to compare your church to others or try to solve your church’s problems with other church’s solutions. ☞

# Worthy of resolution

## Alabama's General Fund Budget in crisis

By James L. Dill, Ed.D.  
Executive Director, Alabama Council of Community  
Mental Health Boards

**A**labama's General Fund (GF) budget is not sufficient to provide the essential functions of state government. Gov. Robert Bentley has said so. The House and Senate Budget Chairs have demonstrated so by introducing a GF budget that is based on available revenues for fiscal year 2016. This budget would decimate the services provided by some state agencies and would cause much pain and suffering for many of the state's most vulnerable citizens. It also would potentially compromise the quality of life for all Alabamians.

So how did Alabama get into such a mess? For many years the GF budget has been propped up with numerous, nonsustainable revenue sources. These "band aid" approaches have been exhausted. The Federal Stimulus Program has expired, the Rainy Day Fund has been borrowed to the maximum amount allowed by law and the day of reckoning for the GF has finally arrived.

Signing a pledge promising no new taxes has become a requisite for being elected to office in the majority of legislative districts in Alabama.

In addition to the pledge signed by some, all lawmakers are required to take an Oath of Office prior to assuming the duties of the office of legislator. The Oath of Office is not to a party or organization. It is an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Alabama and to faithfully discharge the duties of the office. This oath is sworn to before God. The duties of the office of legislator include assuring sufficient revenues to meet the essential functions of state government.

### Insufficient revenues

As attested to by the governor and budget chairs, Alabama will not have sufficient revenues to satisfy the essential functions of state government in fiscal year 2016. As a case in point, consider the appropriation that is being considered for the Department of Mental Health. The current budget proposal is to cut mental health by \$35 million. A funding cut of that amount will result in a corresponding loss of federal dollars, increasing the total funding loss to approximately \$100 million.

The Department of Mental Health was cut \$40 million in 2009. A reduction in services was avoided by closing Searcy and Greil Hospitals and transferring patients to appropriate and more cost efficient community services.

The Department has no more hospitals that can be closed that would again avoid service cuts. The number of state hospital beds has been reduced from about 8,000 in 1970 to about 500 today. All of the state's Developmental Centers have been closed. The savings to the GF budget due to this shift to community care may be measured in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

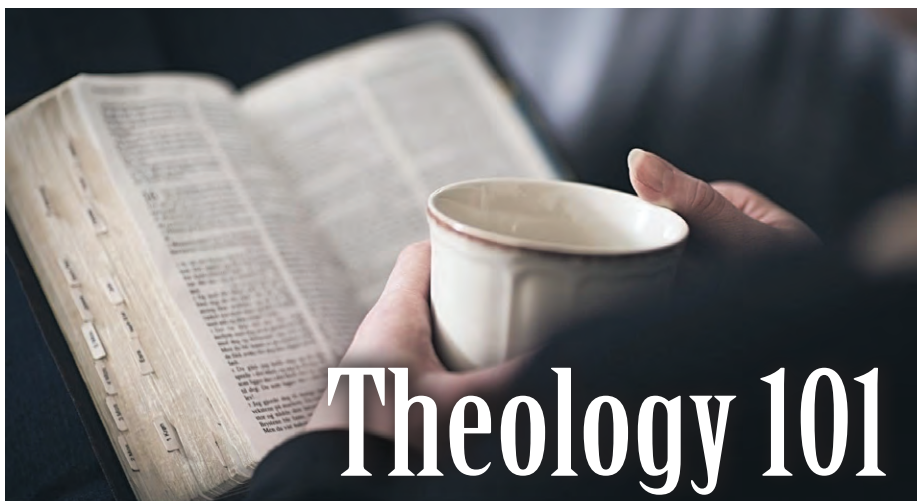
### 'Essential function of state'

Title 22-50-15 of the Alabama Code, establishes residential care, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Mental Health, as an "essential function of state government." Mental Health Commissioner Jim Reddoch informed the Joint Legislative Budget Committees on April 8, that the currently proposed GF budget will result in the termination of services to more than 24,000 individuals with serious mental illness and over 1,100 persons with intellectual disabilities. These individuals will lose their treatment, their medications and approximately 2,000 will lose their place to live. Homelessness, incarceration or a return to state hospitals

are their only options. Alabama's mental health system was under federal court jurisdiction from the early 1970s until 2002. Passage of this GF budget will assure a fast track back to federal court. The state has already been so notified.

Resolving Alabama's GF shortfall will not be easy. Faithfulness to the no tax pledge may prevail, in spite of oaths of office and scriptural imperatives. Revenue increases may ultimately come from measures other than tax increases. But if funding reductions must ultimately be made, eliminating treatment, care, food and shelter for Alabama's most vulnerable citizens would be inhumane, immoral, a violation of the oath of office and contrary to Scripture.

Romans 13 informs us that government is established by God, for our good and for His purposes. Matthew 25 commands us to care for "the least of those among us." When we care for those in need great reward is promised, but the judgment is pronounced when we choose not to do so. ❏



## Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

### Images of the Church

## Church as Citizenry

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

**A**s we have seen over a number of weeks, the Bible contains images of the Church drawn from many common contexts. Last week we considered the image of the Church as a letter. Prior to that one we have thought about images from the pastoral arena (the Church as God's flock) and agricultural life (the Church as God's field). The religious realm furnished two images (the Church as a temple and as a priesthood). The biological area yields us the image of the Church as the body of Christ, while the sociological area gives us images of the Church as a household and as a bride. The political arena furnishes us two more images: the Church as "citizenry" or nation and the Church as "dispersion." This week we think of the first of these.

### Citizenship in heaven

Addressing Christians in ancient Philippi, Philippians 3:20 declares, "Our citizenship is in heaven." The form of the Greek term for citizenship carries the idea of "place of citizenship." That Greek word for place of citizenship "politeuma" is from the root word that gives English terms such as politics and political.

We might recall that Philippi was a Roman colony. As such, many Roman citizens made up its population. Thus Philippian Christians would have immediately understood the idea of being a resident of one city (Philippi) while holding citizenship in another (Rome). Given this situation, those Christians could readily identify with the truth of holding citizenship in heaven while yet living on earth.

In our day we also can understand the idea of being a citizen simultaneously of two countries. The United States allows dual citizenship with certain countries. For example a person born in our neighbor to the south is a native-born Mexican. If the person moves to the United States and becomes a naturalized U.S. citizen, that person could have dual citizenship. When noncitizens choose to meet the qualifications for citizenship, we might

refer to them as naturalized citizens.

When we attend church next Sunday and look around at the gathered congregation we are beholding a group of "super-naturalized" citizens, members of a heavenly kingdom. Ephesians 2:19 puts it like this, "You are no longer strangers and aliens but you are fellow citizens with the saints."

With citizenship in heaven, Christians owe ultimate allegiance to the place of that citizenship. Jesus put it simply, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Peter grasped this idea about his place of allegiance, declaring, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Ideally the Church honors and serves God through obedience to human laws, recognizing that human government exists by God's permission. However, in instances when demands laid down by earthly laws conflict with God's principles the Church's higher loyalty lies with our heavenly place of citizenship.

The preferred way is for the Church's obedience to earthly rulers and laws to reflect obedience to God. In short, being citizens of heaven should make us better citizens on earth. Being the best of citizens helps make us the best of witnesses and examples to others.

With our heavenly citizenship firmly in place, the Church lives with the awareness that many are living without such citizenship. Our mission is to help outsiders become insiders. As a holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9) the Church makes up a citizenry with dual citizenship and, at the same time, we are concerned to help those who were not a people to become God's people (1 Pet. 2:10). ❏

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.



# 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.

## BLOUNT

► **Pleasant View Missionary Church, Holly Pond**, will hold a third Sunday night singing May 17, 6 p.m. "Shepherd's Voice" from Brooklyn will perform. For more information call 256-796-5986 or 256-590-4468. Randy Burtram is pastor.

## MADISON

► **Hillwood Church, Huntsville**, will host gospel singer Ivan Parker in concert May 29, 7 p.m. For more information call 256-883-0485. Charles Freeman is pastor.

## ETOWAH

► **Roger Graham** is the new pastor of **Bellevue Church, Gadsden**. His first day was April 13. He previously served as pas-

tor of Nazareth Church, Rainsville. He also served at Broadway Church, Rainsville, and Carrolls Creek Church, Northport. He holds a bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Alabama and

## GRAHAM

a master of divinity from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Ginger, have five children.

## MOBILE

► **First Church, Irvington**, will hold "Ole South Day" on May 30, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. There will be cooking, basket making, quilt-

ing, period music, a blacksmith, arts and crafts and more. For more information call Shirikae Christian-Elrod at 251-957-2718. Ron Griffin is pastor.

## MONTGOMERY

► **Catoma Church, Montgomery**, will hold a fifth Sunday night singing May 31, 5:30 p.m. Harlan Burton will perform. A love offering will be collected. There will be a fellowship immediately following the program. For more information call 334-265-2881. Chad Underwood is pastor.

## SAND MOUNTAIN

► **New Home Church, Pisgah**, will hold a special "Harvest Sunday" Day of Worship service May 31, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. Phil Hoskins will speak. David Smith is pastor. ☪

## Hundreds of girls, women rescued from Boko Haram

The Nigerian military rescued a second set of female captives April 29 from the Sambisa Forest stronghold of Boko Haram in northeastern Borno state, Nigeria, just one day after securing more than 200 girls and 93 women from the same area.

About 220 teenage Chibok schoolgirls missing for more than a year are not believed to be among those secured, but the identities of all of the females recovered are still being determined, Nigeria military officials said in news reports. Officials have not disclosed

the number of women and girls included in the second set of captives freed, but those rescued have been evacuated to a safety zone for further screening.

### Dangerous rescue

Those rescued are said to be in need of intensive psychological treatment. Some have been so indoctrinated in Boko Haram ideology that the females opened fire on soldiers trying to free them, and others may have become emotionally attached to militants they were forced to marry, *Associated Press*

reported. In the latest rescue, several people were killed including a Nigerian soldier and a woman.

Newly elected president Muhammadu Buhari has vowed to defeat Boko Haram and gain freedom for the 219 Chibok schoolgirls still missing since the militants kidnapped nearly 300 students and destroyed their boarding school April 15, 2014. More than 70 of the girls managed to escape on their own.

Since the beginning of 2014, Boko Haram has kidnapped at least 2,000 women and girls, Amnesty International has estimated. (BP)

## Whitesburg's Jackson opens US House in prayer



Photo courtesy of Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

Pastor Jimmy Jackson (left), of Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville, delivered the morning prayer at the United States House of Representatives on April 29 at the invitation of U.S. Rep. Mo Brooks (right). Jackson is pictured here with his wife, Bobbi. To watch the video of Jackson's prayer, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGzymGPHP7o>.

## Someone You Should Know

By Leigh Pritchett, Correspondent, *The Alabama Baptist*

### Dot Bostrom

*First Baptist Church, Jackson  
Clarke Baptist Association*

**FAVORITE VERSES:** Psalm 100:1-5

**FAVORITE HYMN:** "In the Garden"

**HOBBIES:** China painting, reading, sewing

**FAMILY STATUS:** Widow for seven years after 65 years of marriage to husband, Marion; daughters, Terri Henley; Tena Hoyle; Tam Horton; Tanya Overton and Tracey Nance; 12 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren



BOSTROM

*Dot Bostrom, of Jackson, has a heart for exceptional individuals. In fact, 54 years ago she established a Sunday School class for individuals with special needs and continues to teach it. Once a week she also goes to Clarke County Association for Retarded Citizens to read a book or Bible story to participants. In addition she has a love for China painting and teaches three classes on it each week. These classes, which she has been leading for more than 20 years, even attract participants from other counties. Bostrom, 90, describes China painting as "an old, old art," one that she learned from her grandmother, Imogen Kirven. Through the years Bostrom has been involved in her church's choir, Woman's Missionary Union, missions efforts and various community organizations.*

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

A: When I was a little girl I went to Sunbeams (the former name for 4-year-old classes at Latter-day Saints churches, now called CTR 4) and to church every Sunday. My parents carried me to church and influenced me to do the right thing. I was about 8 years old when I was baptized.

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

A: By my mother when I was a child. She led me by getting me up every Sunday morning and taking me to church.

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

A: I prepare a lesson for every Sunday and I'm there every Sunday.

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

A: I stay with the Lord. I get peace, joy and fulfillment.

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

A: They are very supportive. They have been brought up like that. They help me when my class has a party.

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

A: As long as I'm able.

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

A: It will help keep me strong and keep my mind busy.

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

A: I can't imagine if I didn't have Jesus with me. ☪

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](mailto:news@thealabamabaptist.org).

Alabama Baptist Convention **State Board of Missions**Focus  
on
**ONE MISSION**
**ONE MISSION:** The Great Commission **ONE PROGRAM:** The Cooperative Program **MANY MINISTRIES:** Great Commission Ministries

*news and features about missions and ministries from the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions | (800) 264-1224 | [www.alsbom.org](http://www.alsbom.org)*

# Call to **40** Days of Prayer

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall become one flesh."



These words as recorded in Genesis 2 and quoted by Jesus in Matthew 19 are the foundational verses for our understanding and belief concerning the definition of biblical marriage, which is one man and one woman for a lifetime.



By Mike Jackson  
*State Missionary*

Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments about the legality of marriages involving same-sex couples/unions.

The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions trustees have acted proactively to support biblical marriage during their recent meetings. Earlier in the year, the State Board reaffirmed a Resolution on Biblical Marriage that was adopted at the 2013 annual State Convention meeting.

Now Alabama Baptists have the opportunity to unite in a prayer emphasis called "40 Days of Prayer for Moral and Spiritual Awakening: A Celebration of Biblical Marriage," which began April 28 and concludes June 6.

Today this view of marriage has come under attack by the world in which we live. Our culture has forsaken the long-held tradition of marriage being between one man and one woman as the biblical standard by which we live and practice.

Federal courts have taken the authority to overturn what many states have affirmed through the vote and voices of the majority of the people.

During this time, we are encouraging believers to join in prayer for our nation and to thank God for biblical marriage. A daily email will be sent to those who have signed up. These emails will contain a scripture passage and a prayer prompt for the day.

It is not too late to sign up for these daily emails by visiting [alsbom.org/40days](http://alsbom.org/40days). You will receive on your computer, phone, tablet or other electronic device the information for this daily prayer focus.

Let me encourage you to join this prayer effort. God hears our prayers as we pray in a united effort. Prayer is the key to impacting our world and culture with the good news of the Gospel.

As we live day by day to fulfill

the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, our source of strength is prayer. History shows us that every great movement of God has always been preceded by urgent, extraordinary prayer by His people. If we expect to experience moral and spiritual awakening as well as revival in our nation, we must turn to God and seek Him in prayer.

Thank you for your stand with other believers as we pray with a united focus for our nation and biblical marriage. Thank you for standing on the Word of God and its definition of biblical marriage.

*State Missionary Mike Jackson has the responsibility for prayer ministry for the State Board of Missions. He may be contacted at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 210, or (334) 613-2210, [mjackson@alsbom.org](mailto:mjackson@alsbom.org).*

**FOCUS on One Mission**

# ALABAMA BAPTIST BOYS CAMPS

## JUNE AND JULY 2015

Alabama Baptists have provided summer camps for boys for more than 70 years. Steve Stephens has 23 years of experience directing the camps. Most of the camp counselors are college-age young men who have been recommended by their churches or campus ministers. Background checks and three current references are required. Reference information includes personal relationships, emotional and spiritual maturity, working relationships, and leadership ability. The most important question asked of a reference is: "Would you put your own child in the care of this young man?"

Camps feature outdoor worship, swimming, patriotic services, archery, outdoor cooking, Bible studies, rope craft, slingshots, air rifles, tomahawks, canoeing, Frisbee football, blow darts, compass course, hiking and nature identification, and missions classes with Southern Baptist missionaries.



June 22-25 June 25-27	Southeast Alabama Southeast Alabama	The Vineyard Christian Retreat Center, Ariton (near Ozark) The Vineyard Christian Retreat Center, Ariton (near Ozark)	4th-12th Grade Boys Camp 1st-6th Grade Lad and Dad or Mom Camp
July 6-9 July 9-11	Northeast Alabama Northeast Alabama	Marshall Retreat Center, Guntersville Marshall Retreat Center, Guntersville	4th-12th Grade Boys Camp 1st-6th Grade Lad and Dad Camp
July 13-16 July 16-18	Northwest Alabama Northwest Alabama	Earle Trent Assembly Baptist Camp, Florence Earle Trent Assembly Baptist Camp, Florence	4th-12th Grade Boys Camp 1st-6th Grade Lad and Dad Camp
July 27-30 July 30- Aug. 1	Central Alabama Central Alabama	WorldSong Missions Camp, Cook Springs WorldSong Missions Camp, Cook Springs	4th-12th Grade Boys Camp 1st-6th Grade Lad and Dad or Mom Camp

For a registration form, brochures or other information, go to [alsbom.org/boyscamps](http://alsbom.org/boyscamps) or contact State Missionary Steve Stephens (the camp director) at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 268, or (334) 613-2268, [sstephens@alsbom.org](mailto:sstephens@alsbom.org).

ONEMISSION: The Great Commission ONEPROGRAM: The Cooperative Program MANYMINISTRIES: Great Commission Ministries

# Baptist Men's Softball Tournament

**August 7-8, 2015**

**Lagoon Park & Fain Park, Montgomery**

- 40-team maximum • ASA sanctioned
- Round robin tournament • ASA-sanctioned teams only • Single elimination in championship round of 16 teams

**Cost:** \$165 entry fee

Each team will play at least four games.



For entry requirements to participate and an information packet, please contact Ministry Assistant Mondene Coker at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 273, or (334) 613-2273, [mcoker@alsbom.org](mailto:mcoker@alsbom.org).

●●●●●●●  
**BAPTIST  
MEN'S DAY**

DATE FOR 2015:  
**SUNDAY, JUNE 21**  
*(FATHER'S DAY)*

THEME:  
"SPIRITUAL GIFTS:  
PRAYER AND  
DISCOVERY"

**EMPHASIS:** "WHO HAS THE GIFTS  
THAT GOD HAS GIVEN TO BELIEVERS  
FOR OUR CHURCH'S MINISTRY?"

Through prayer and a spiritual gifts  
survey, recognize the gifts that each  
man has to fulfill the mission of the  
church. A "Spiritual Gifts Discovery &  
Inventory" is available on the Alabama  
Baptist State Board of Missions  
website at [alsbom.org/men](http://alsbom.org/men).

*For a survey and other information, you  
may also contact Ministry Assistant Monica  
Thompson at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 227, or  
(334) 613-2227, [mthompson@alsbom.org](mailto:mthompson@alsbom.org).*



CONSIDER  
HOW MUCH  
**MORE**  
WE CAN DO  
**TOGETHER.**  
**IT'S ALL  
ABOUT THE  
KINGDOM.**

*For information and  
resources about the  
Cooperative Program,  
please contact  
State Missionary  
Jim Swedenburg,  
1-800-264-1225, ext. 283,  
[jswedenburg@alsbom.org](mailto:jswedenburg@alsbom.org).*



WHAT IF ...

- ... the mission team from your church was detained by a foreign government?
- ... a volunteer on your team was held by criminals in a foreign country?
- ... a natural disaster interrupted travel plans for your team?
- ... a volunteer became seriously ill or injured on the field?

**ALL of these situations have occurred with Alabama Baptist teams!**

We can help. **Travelers' Shield** has you covered!

... in the event of natural disaster, health problem, government detention or criminal act.

**Travelers' Shield** is offered to all who complete Faith Focused Safe-Travel Training.

**FAITH FOCUSED SAFE-TRAVEL TRAINING**

LEVEL A

**May 14**, Covington Association Office, Andalusia

Register online at [a18c.org/travelersshield](http://a18c.org/travelersshield)

**WORSHIP & MUSIC LEADERSHIP EVENTS**

**Children's Choir Summit Leadership Conference**



**CHILDREN'S CHOIR SUMMIT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IS AN EXCITING, HANDS-ON TRAINING THAT WILL ALLOW YOU TO:**

- Discover new ways to make choir a favorite for kids.
- Learn how you can use games to enhance your music program.
- Create an ideal opportunity for children to experience worship.
- Network with outstanding clinicians from across the U.S.
- Network with other people in similar situations.

This year's conference is **July 10-11, 2015**, at Shocco Springs. Cost (based on 3-4 persons per room and includes lodging, 3 meals, 8 sessions & dessert buffet): \$110 per person; \$20 deposit per person due upon registration.

For more information, go to [alsbom.org/children-summit](http://alsbom.org/children-summit), or please contact State Missionary Karen Gosselin at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 318, or (334) 613-2318, [kgosselin@alsbom.org](mailto:kgosselin@alsbom.org); Ministry Assistant Sharon Cleveland, ext. 279, or 334-613-2279, [scleveland@alsbom.org](mailto:scleveland@alsbom.org).

**MIX MUSIC CAMP**

At Mix Music Camp, we work to identify and help train worship leaders for the next generation. If being at music camp isn't enough, here are a few more things we'll be doing: hiking trails, miniature golf, basketball, volleyball, pedal boats, horseshoes, octaball, disc golf, poly pong, fishing, ropes course, paintball, pedal cars, swimming.

Mix Music Camp is **July 13-17, 2015**, Shocco Springs. Cost: \$295 per person; \$80 deposit per person due upon registration.

For more information, go to [mixmusiccamp.org](http://mixmusiccamp.org), or please contact Ministry Assistant Cindy Parrish at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 230, (334) 613-2230, [cparrish@alsbom.org](mailto:cparrish@alsbom.org).



## From State Missionary Lamar Duke, Lead Church Planting Strategist:

A few months before our friend and ministry partner, Keith Loomis, went home to be with the Lord after a long battle with cancer, he and I had a brief conversation about how much Power Plant meant to my work in church planting in Pittsburgh (2002-2008).



Power Plant is a World Changer-type event where students work alongside a planter, rather than repair homes, etc. He was obviously moved by my statements about it.

I inquired as to why my words had affected him in such a dramatic way. He then shared that he and Andy Morris had sketched on a napkin the idea which became Power Plant in a restaurant in Memphis, Tenn.

The Lord would not allow me to get this idea out of my mind, which led us to have another meeting to follow up and plan how to make this happen in Alabama. Here is the pilot project:

## PLANT IT ALABAMA

July 12-17 at Romar Beach Baptist Church

Designed for middle and high school students (13-18 year olds).

**Only 72 beds available**

for this pilot project.

**DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION is**

**May 15, 2015. Cost is \$150 per person** (newly reduced price).

A \$75 non-refundable deposit will reserve your spot. Total will be due no later than July 12, 2015. Your assigned projects will be outlined by no later than June 12, 2015. Notes



will need to be provided by student pastors as to students who do not need to be placed together or those who should be placed together. It will be expected that each group have at least a ratio of one chaperone per five students coming.

**Student Pastor:** Here is an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of something exciting here in our state. Even if you have your 2015 student camps already scheduled, this event affords you the opportunity to handpick students in whom you may see the potential of them being planters or serving in a missions setting.

**Worship leaders:** Annel Robayna and Ralph Rimmer. *"Basics of Church Planting,"* led by Chris Bell.

For more information or to register your students visit [www.alsbom.org/PlantItAlabama](http://www.alsbom.org/PlantItAlabama) or contact State Missionary Lamar Duke at [lduke@alsbom.org](mailto:lduke@alsbom.org).

## 2015 CHURCH PLANTING TRAINING EVENTS

### BALDWIN AREA:

May 14-16, 2015 • 3 Circle Church, 10274 State Highway 104, Fairhope

### HUNTSVILLE AREA:

August 13-15, 2015 • Madison Baptist Association, 2318 Whitesburg Dr. S., Huntsville

Each location will offer two tracks to choose from.

Registration is only \$25 for SBC-affiliated participants. Each participant is responsible for their own hotel accommodations if traveling from outside of the area. Non-SBC participants are welcome to attend for \$100 per person.

Each of these trainings will run parallel. Each participant must choose and declare which training before beginning the seminar. A \$25 non-refundable registration fee is required to register for either of these events.

For questions or more information, please contact Ministry Andrea Towns at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 244, or (334) 613-2244, [atownns@alsbom.org](mailto:atownns@alsbom.org).

# 2015 MISSIONS ADVENTURE CAMPS

**For girls in grades K-12 and boys in grades 2-6**

High-adventure camping with a missions emphasis, featuring:

- Bible study and worship experiences
- Time with missionaries
- Crafts and cultural activities
- Ropes course for older campers
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Zip lines for those completing 4th grade and above
- Swimming
- Hiking

### Missions Adventure Camp for Girls

(girls completing grades 3-6): June 15-19, June 22-26, July 6-10, July 20-24

### Mini Missions

**Adventure Camp for Girls** (girls completing grades 2-6): June 8-10

**Missions Adventure Camp for Teen Girls** (teen girls completing grades 7-12): June 15-19, July 6-10

**Extreme Missions Adventure Camp for Teen Girls** (teen girls completing grades 7-12): June 8-10

**Missions Adventure Camp for CITs** (teen girls completing grades 9-12): June 22-26

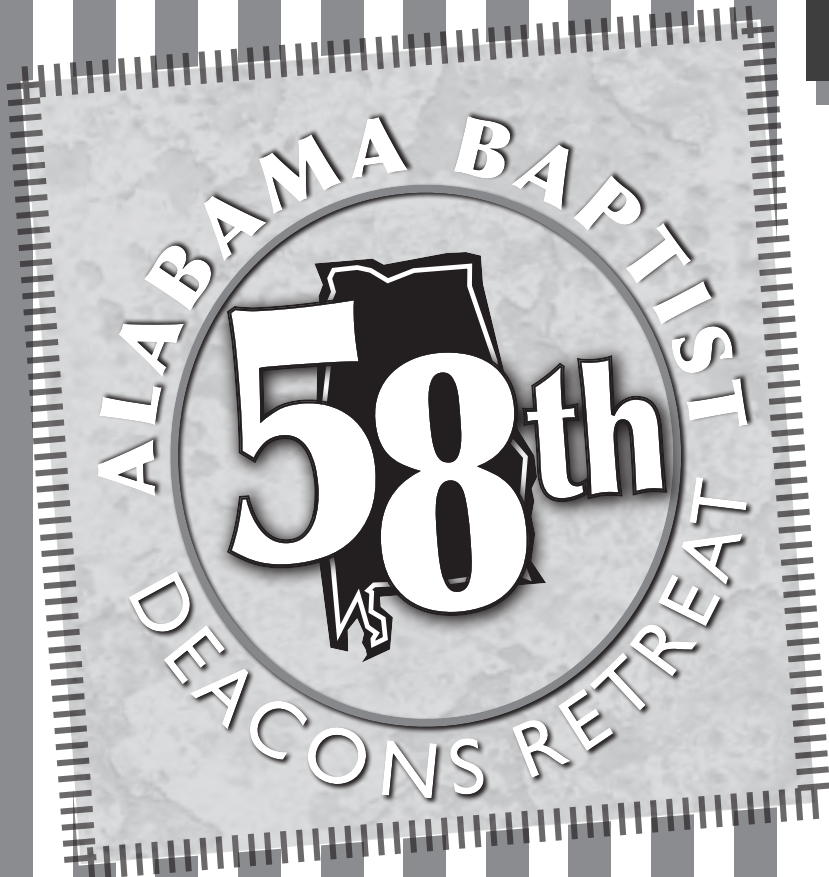
**Missions Adventure Camp for Children** (girls and boys completing grades 2-6): July 13-17

**Missions Adventure Camp for Mom and Me** (moms and girls completing grades 2-6): June 11-13

**Missions Adventure Camp for Mom and Me Little** (moms and daughters completing grades K-3): June 19-20, July 10-11

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For more information, go to [worldsongretreat.com](http://worldsongretreat.com) or contact Kathryn Helms at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 325, or (334) 613-2325, [khelms@alsbom.org](mailto:khelms@alsbom.org).



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*with*

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*For more information, please contact State Missionary Steve Stephens at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 268, or (334) 613-2268, [sstephens@alsbom.org](mailto:sstephens@alsbom.org).*

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The Summit begins on Friday, July 31, with Early Bird Mega Conferences from 1:30 to 3:30, followed by a worship rally beginning at 3:45. Supper will be served beginning at 4:45, followed by two conference times at 6:15 and 7:45. **Saturday's schedule:** breakfast beginning at 6:30, with conference times Saturday morning at 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00. Lunch will be served at noon.

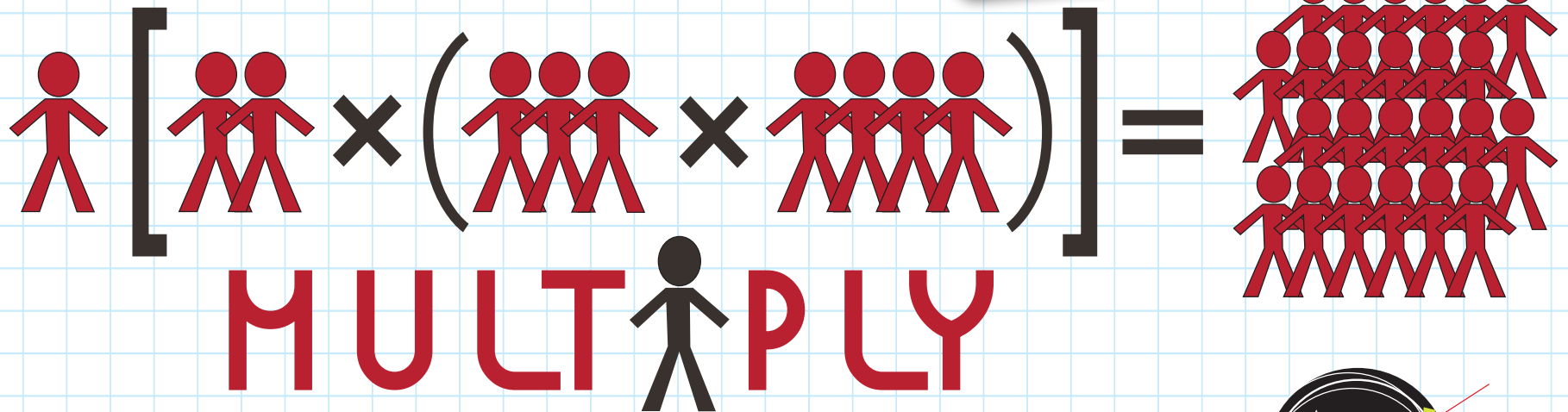
The Summit is for pastors, other ministers, teachers and other workers and leaders. Watch your mail and check online at [alsbom.org/summit](http://alsbom.org/summit) for updates. You may go to [shocco.org](http://shocco.org) or call 1-800-280-1105 for pricing information and to register.

*For more information about The Summit, please contact State Missionary Jamie Baldwin at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 240 or 334-613-2240.*

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For info or to register:  
[www.alsbom.org/south](http://www.alsbom.org/south)  
 Contact: Jamie Baldwin,  
 1-800-264-1225, ext. 240,  
[jbaldwin@alsbom.org](mailto:jbaldwin@alsbom.org)

**NORTH: Lindsay Lane Baptist Church, Athens**  
 August 22  
 EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE: August 20  
 For info or to register:  
[www.alsbom.org/north](http://www.alsbom.org/north)  
 Contact: Daniel Edmonds,  
 1-800-264-1225, ext. 285,  
[dedmonds@alsbom.org](mailto:dedmonds@alsbom.org)

**METRO: Lakeside Baptist Church, Birmingham**  
 August 29  
 EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE: August 27  
 For info or to register:  
[www.alsbom.org/metro](http://www.alsbom.org/metro)  
 Contact: Jamie Baldwin,  
 1-800-264-1225, ext. 240,  
[jbaldwin@alsbom.org](mailto:jbaldwin@alsbom.org)

*“Our country is hurting and afraid. What we need is a revolution — not a physical revolution but one in people’s hearts.”*

Melanie  
South African Christian blogger



Volunteers provide bags of food for victims of xenophobic attacks in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Photo courtesy of Stephen Haber

# Call for SOLIDARITY

## Christians pray for peace, unity amid violence in South Africa

**W**hile anti-immigrant violence was tearing their city apart, 150 believers at a small Baptist church stood together to ask God to bring peace to their country.

An elder at the church in Johannesburg, South Africa, called out the ethnic groups by name: white South African, Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana, Mozambican, Zimbabwean and a dozen more. Everyone stood — black and white, young and old, joining hands across

the aisles and singing together, “We are one in the Spirit.”

“It was beautiful,” an International Mission Board (IMB) worker said. “We saw beautiful unity within the body of Christ today.”

### Church’s voice needed

Christians throughout South Africa are calling for further displays of solidarity against ethnic violence in their country, aware that historically their churches have not always been a strong voice for unity —

some supporting the violence, others refusing to get involved.

“South Africans, both white and black, usually observe without interfering,” the worker said. “So pray that the Church would find boldness to both speak out and defend those being attacked. Pray that the Church would not be passive right now.”

Although South Africans and immigrants normally live and work side-by-side, historic racial hostilities run just beneath the surface in this multiethnic society. The latest firestorm erupted in late March after the Zulu king publicly called for foreigners living in South Africa to “go home,” blaming them for a sluggish job market and increased violence in the country.

In an apparent reaction to the king’s comments, Zulus in a township near the city of Durban reportedly responded with riots and violence, killing five, injuring hundreds, looting and burning businesses and running people out of town. Later the xenophobic attacks — attacks against people from other countries — moved to South Africa’s largest city, Johannesburg, and its surrounding areas, causing widespread panic as thousands of immigrants have fled their homes.

Another IMB worker and his family helped at a makeshift camp that sprang up practically overnight next to a Methodist church near their home. The church led in organizing efforts to assist victims of the attacks, and several IMB workers volunteered their time and resources to help.

The church cared for more than 1,000 people who were housed in tents in the middle of the suburb where it is located.

In addition to meeting the physical needs

## Pray for ...

- ▶ **UNITY AND BOLDNESS** for South African churches in the aftermath of violence and hatred.
- ▶ **CHRISTIANS** to get involved in ministering to those around them who are hurting and scared.
- ▶ **MIGRANT WORKERS** in South Africa who have lost homes and businesses and live in fear and uncertainty of what the future holds.

of those in the camps, volunteers and members of a local Baptist church found opportunities to share the gospel with the people seeking refuge there.

Christian workers and national believers alike are praying that such actions will be undertaken by more churches as they rise to the challenge of demonstrating peace, taking a stand against fear and hatred, and boldly sharing the gospel.

### Rebuilding from nothing

Although the violence has since subsided, thousands who have lost homes and businesses will have to rebuild their fragile lives from nothing.

“The immigrants that I know are very fearful for what is going to happen to them next,” the IMB worker said.

Melanie, a South African Christian blogger, reminded her readers of the words of Scripture in Leviticus 19, “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. ... Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

“Our country is broken,” she noted. “Our country is hurting and afraid. What we need is a revolution — not a physical revolution but one in people’s hearts.” (BP)



Photo courtesy of Stephen Haber

Victims of xenophobic violence in South Africa wait for aid at a makeshift camp outside a suburban Johannesburg church.

Residents drive by some of the destruction in Kathmandu, Nepal.



IMB photo

# 'Physical and spiritual needs collide'

## Pray for Nepali people to know God's comfort, peace

(continued from page 3)  
those representatives have received BGR humanitarian crisis training.

"That's exciting news — that those guys are getting together and responding and using the local church to do so," he said.

Horton met with the committee April 29 and finalized partnership plans with BGR. Committee members began relief assessment with DART a few days later.

DART and the committee members made contacts with local officials and leaders in order to determine the major needs other organizations had not yet targeted.

"DART is (a key part) of getting a good assessment," Horton said. "(It will help) determine how the Church in the United States might be involved in meeting some of those needs, partnering with local folks here in Nepal. That partnership is a key element — really essential in trying to meet the needs in appropriate ways."

According to Mel Johnson, Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief strategist, Alabama disaster relief personnel, part of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) Region 2, are next in line for international deployment and are on "alert status."

### 'At the ready'

SBDR is divided into six geographic regions to help keep response efforts and personnel organized and to be able to respond in a coordinated way, Johnson said.

"We will remain at the ready to respond as needed," he said at press time.

Samaritan's Purse was another relief organization that rushed disaster relief teams, medical personnel and emergency aid to help survivors of the quake. Baptist World Alliance, the United Nations and other international aid agencies also are working in Nepal to help.

David Platt, International Mis-

sion Board president, said in a statement, "In light of the lack of gospel access in so much of Nepal, seeing urgent physical and spiritual needs collide like this is overwhelming. Like the falling of the tower of Siloam in Luke's Gospel, this earthquake is a fresh reminder of the urgent need for God's people to hasten in getting the gospel to peoples all

around the world. ... I want to exhort the global Church to seize this opportunity to pray more fervently, give more sacrificially and go more urgently to the peoples of Nepal."

Getting to rural areas is difficult. Government officials estimate

about 80 percent of the houses in rural areas have been destroyed. The quake occurred at a depth of 9.3 miles, which is considered shallow and more damaging than a deeper quake. News from remote areas near the quake's epicenter, where many more may have died, has been scant.

Christian workers in Nepal are asking believers in the United States to join them in prayer:

▶ Pray for basic shelter, water and food. These necessities are a high priority.

▶ Pray for God's people to deeply know His comfort and peace during this time. Pray they will share the gospel with those around them.

▶ Pray for people in surrounding areas in the aftermath of this disaster. (Compiled from wire services, TAB)

EDITOR'S NOTE — Names changed for security reasons.



IMB photo

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## Center for SCIENCE and RELIGION

**Howard Room, University Center  
Samford University  
May 19  
8 a.m.-12:15 p.m.**

The Samford University Center for Science and Religion will present a free interdenominational workshop for pastors, exploring how faith and emerging science can enrich each other.

**Samford faculty will lead discussions  
on the following topics:**

What is the Relationship between Science and Religion?  
*Dr. George Keller, Department of Biology*

Why do People have Trouble with Evolution?  
*Dr. Wilton Bunch*

Can There be Purpose in a World of Chance?  
*Dr. Tom Woolley*

Toward a Theology of Science  
*Dr. Josh Reeves*

Refreshments and lunch will be provided for registered participants.

To register, email Josh Reeves  
jareeves@samford.edu | 205-726-2940

This workshop is one in a series funded by a generous grant from the John Templeton Foundation.



www.samford.edu/scienceandreligion

# Relief efforts

## Disaster relief offers opportunities to share Christ

(continued from page 1)  
Baptist Association, Walker Baptist Association and a heavy equipment team from the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM) were working on chainsaw crews, cleanup crews and cooking, serving and delivering meals to volunteers. At press time, 131 volunteers were working in Dothan and surrounding areas.

Volunteers from Bethlehem Baptist Church, Midland City; Bay Springs Baptist Church, Dothan; Calvary Cottonwood Baptist Church, Cottonwood; Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Dothan; and Logos Baptist Church, Dothan (which has applied for membership in Columbia Association), were cooking and delivering meals for the volunteers or allowing volunteers to eat at the church building. Each day more churches were helping in this capacity, Farley said.

One unique aspect of the disaster relief efforts was that the Dothan Harley-Davidson store allowed the local Faith Riders Motorcycle Ministry chapter and Columbia Association's volunteers to set up tents and serve lunch to disaster relief volunteers April 29.



Photo courtesy of *The Dothan Eagle*

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief District 5 coordinator Harold Southerland assesses areas in the south and southeast portion of Houston County on April 29 following the storms.

Other churches, like Cloverdale Baptist Church, Dothan, and Wiregrass Church, Dothan, also served in disaster relief efforts in the area and more than 100 families without power, at press time, had been fed by five local churches.

At press time Southerland said many requests and work orders were still being filed and he and Farley still had assessments to

make. Downed power lines caused problems for completing assessments and getting relief teams to certain areas.

Ridgecrest Baptist, which has its own disaster relief trailer, was part of the association's overall relief effort and housed teams from outside the area.

Chuck Locke, who handles the missions endeavors as assistant pastor of Ridgecrest, said many of the volunteers who met at the church at 6:30 a.m. on April 26 to help in relief work had been through disaster relief training. By April 28, Ridgecrest teams had completed work on 10 homes and were working on other homes at press time.

### 'God loves you'

Locke said disaster relief is a way to show "our community that Ridgecrest and the believers love you and God loves you."

During relief efforts 12 evangelistic conversations took place with those who were being helped by Ridgecrest teams, Locke said.

"That's been the best part of it. To show God's love in a practical way and see where He leads."

Mel Johnson, Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief strategist, said churches in Columbia Association "really stepped up to the plate to feed and house the disaster relief teams" and "have been a strategic part of our response efforts."

On May 4, four teams arrived in the area to relieve the initial seven teams and to continue in the second week of relief efforts.

At press time Johnson reported that 47 jobs were completed and 28 professions of faith had been made. ☞

## Living with a Reverse Mortgage

By **Jimmy Dixon**

"What is it like to have a reverse mortgage?" Max and Carolyn Youngblood (a retired pastor and wife) have answered:

"Carolyn and I took out a reverse mortgage a little over two years ago after reading Jimmy Dixon's article in *The Alabama Baptist*. Jimmy came to our home and he was most knowledgeable, kind and patient — a true Christian gentleman.

We decided to apply because we had a mortgage that was a struggle to pay each month. Plus there were some improvements that we wanted to make to our home.

Since we closed on our reverse mortgage, life is better because we no longer have any monthly payments

and our home looks so much better.

Each month we receive informative statements from the lender. We are pleased that we have a reverse mortgage and we highly recommend Jimmy to you."

*Remember, like The Alabama Baptist, Jimmy covers our great state helping seniors improve the quality of their lives. He is Bible study director and an active deacon at Valley Creek Baptist Church, Hueytown. For a free brochure, quote or DVD, contact him directly at 205-567-4800 or jdixon@mcgowinking.com.*



**Max and Carolyn**



**Jimmy Dixon**



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# CAMPUS

## News



### JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson College Choir and Handbell Tour Makes Stops Across Alabama:** The Spring 2015 Judson College Choir and Handbell Tour featured performances by The Judson Singers and Handbell Ensemble on April 30 through May 5.

The student musicians, under the direction of Camilla Horne, assistant professor of music and head of the music department at Judson, traveled and performed in Alabama for six consecutive days.

The itinerary included churches, high schools and assisted living facilities in Marion, Mobile, Montgomery, Robertsdale, Selma and Spanish Fort.

► **Judson Art Student Hosts 'Wonder Women: United' Exhibit:** Judson College in Marion hosted the exhibition "Wonder Women: United" featuring original digital paintings by senior art student Ashleigh Noelle Hagan. The show was open April 13-17.

Hagan draws inspiration from social injustices to fuel her work. She used Wonder Woman as a visual icon to inspire women to realize their own strength and stand up for themselves.

For more information about the work or the artist, contact Jamie Adams at 334-683-5251.

► **Judson College Hosts J-Day:** Judson College's 2015 homecoming weekend, known

as "J-Day: Send Forth Blessed Light 2015," was held on campus April 10-11.

More than 400 alumnae, their guests and friends, as well as Judson faculty, staff and students attended the annual reunion celebrations starting with the Golden Club Banquet on April 10.

During the Judson College Alumnae Association business meeting April 11 two important award recipients were named. Recipient of the 2015 Outstanding Alumna Award was Caroline Anderson Reich and recipient of the 2015 Alumnae Loyalty Award was Rhonda Caver Lewis.

Judson's vice president and dean of students Susan Jones received the Judson College Alumnae Association's Past President Award for Staff Excellence, which was presented by award committee chair Frances Revel.

In recognition of David E. Potts' 25 years as college president, The David and Beth Potts Award for Outstanding Involvement in Community Service was established; the first recipient of the award was Carla Kinard.

► **Judson College To Host Junior Preview Day On May 9:** Judson College will host its Junior Preview Day on May 9. High school juniors and their parents will have the opportunity to meet faculty and staff, attend sessions on academics and financial aid, enjoy lunch in the college dining hall and participate in campus tours guided by

Judson Student Ambassadors.

Students interested in Judson's equine science program or joining the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association equestrian team also can visit the on-campus Equine Science Center.

For more information, visit [www.judson.edu/visiting-judson](http://www.judson.edu/visiting-judson) or contact the admissions office at 800-447-9472 or [admissions@judson.edu](mailto:admissions@judson.edu).

► **Judson College Hosts Art Exhibit 'Illumination':** The exhibit, "Illumination," featured original paintings by Judson College senior art student Katelyn Collier. On view at the Marian Acree Tucker Gallery at Judson in Marion, the show was open April 27-30.

Collier draws inspiration from literature throughout the ages and images embodying saints, gods and goddesses are the main subjects for her work.

For more information about the work or the artist, contact Jamie Adams at 334-683-5251.

### UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **University of Mobile Professor Awarded James F. Sulzby Book Award:** Matthew L. Downs, University of Mobile assistant professor of history, has received the prestigious 2015 James F. Sulzby Book Award presented by the Alabama Historical Association.

The Sulzby Award recognizes an important book that has contributed to greater knowledge and appreciation of Alabama history.

Downs received the award for his published work, "Transforming the South: Federal Development in the Tennessee Valley."

The presentation was made during the association's awards banquet April 10 in Mobile.

### SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Samford University's Cumberland School of Law Organization Wins State Bar Award:** The Alabama State Bar Volunteer Lawyers Program Committee recently recognized the Public Interest & Community Service Organization (CPICS) at Samford University's Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham. CPICS will receive the 2015 Alabama State Bar Pro Bono Award in the law firm/group category.

CPICS members include Sam Boukli-Hacene, of Decatur, Ga.; Rae Bolton, of Jacksonville, Fla.; Jessica Catlin, of Sylvan Springs; Amanda Herren, of Mobile; Emily Irvin, of Eufala; Elise McFall, of Bluff City, Tenn.; Depri Hale of Lakeland, Fla.; and Lee McLean, of Vestavia Hills.

The awards will be presented at the Bench and Bar Luncheon on July 16 during the state bar annual meeting. ☪

## Want to know GOD?

**Pastor Ray Cummings**  
Golden Acres Baptist Church, Phenix City

The Church today is full of worshippers but is void of witnesses. We have scores of people who want to sing to the Lord but very few who want to stand and bear witness of Him.

Webster's Dictionary defines a witness as a person who sees something happen; a person who is present at an event and can say that it happened.

As believers in Christ we can't help but witness. If we have had an encounter with Christ through salvation, how can we not tell what happened in our lives to those who are in desperate need of the good news?

The Bible records in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

George Sweeting in his book, "The No-Guilt Guide for Witnessing," tells of a man by the name of John Currier who in 1949 was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Later he was transferred and paroled to work on a farm near Nashville. In 1968, Currier's sentence was terminated and a letter bearing the news was sent to him. However, John never saw the letter nor was he told anything about it.

Life on that farm was hard and without promise for the future. Yet John kept doing what he was told even after the farmer for whom he had worked died. Ten years went by. Then a state parole officer learned about Currier's plight, found him and told him that his sentence had been terminated. He was a free man. Sweeting concluded that story by asking, "Would it matter to you if someone sent you an important message — the most important in your life — and year after year the urgent message was never delivered?"

Those of us who have experienced freedom through Christ are responsible to proclaim the good news to others. Are we doing all we can to make sure the lost world gets the message? Since Jesus is worthy of our worship shouldn't He also be worthy of our witness? ☪

## 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](mailto:ADS@THEALABAMABAPTIST.ORG). COPY DEADLINE IS TWO WEEKS BEFORE PUBLICATION.

### CHURCH POSITIONS

**SENIOR PASTOR:** New Lebanon Baptist Church of Newnan, Ga., is a small but growing Southern Baptist church seeking a senior pastor. Please include your testimony, statement of faith, ministry philosophy and a sermon link or CD with your resumé and send to: [nlbc30263@gmail.com](mailto:nlbc30263@gmail.com) or 1674 Wagers Mill Road, Newnan, GA 30263.

**PASTOR:** Southside Baptist Church is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Southside Baptist Church, 1213 West Bypass, Andalusia, AL 36420, or email resúmes to: [southside@sbcandalusia.com](mailto:southside@sbcandalusia.com). Resúmes should be received by May 15.

**PASTOR:** East Side Baptist Church of Cullman, Ala., is accepting resúmes for a full-time position as pastor. Email resúmes to: [eastside1111@att.net](mailto:eastside1111@att.net).

**PASTOR:** Forest Avenue Baptist Church is seeking a God-called, Spirit-filled pastor to lead a growing congregation. Salary based on experience and education. Degree preferred. Send resumé to [FABC7637@att.net](mailto:FABC7637@att.net) or mail to Forest Avenue Baptist Church Search Committee, P.O. Box 611, Jackson, AL 36545.

**BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR/CHURCH PLANTER:** Bay Side Baptist Church,

Lillian (Gulf Shores area), seeking a bivocational pastor/church planter. Send resúmes to: P.O. Box 533, Lillian, AL 36549, or email: [tbobharris@gmail.com](mailto:tbobharris@gmail.com).

**MINISTER OF MUSIC & EDUCATION:** Ridgecrest Baptist Church is accepting resúmes for the position of full-time minister of music and education. Interested parties should mail resúmes to: Ridgecrest Baptist Church, c/o Search Committee, 912 31st Street E, Tuscaloosa, AL 35405, or email resúmes to: [rbcsherri@comcast.net](mailto:rbcsherri@comcast.net).

**MINISTER OF MUSIC:** Five Points Baptist Church, Sylacauga, is accepting resúmes for their bivocational minister of music position. Applicants should submit resumé to: Personnel Committee, P.O. Box 2447, Sylacauga, AL 35150 or [jthayessr@gmail.com](mailto:jthayessr@gmail.com).

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC:** East Side Baptist Church of Cullman, Ala., is accepting resúmes for a part-time position as minister of music. Email resúmes to: [eastside1111@att.net](mailto:eastside1111@att.net).

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES:** Shades Crest Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., is seeking a full-time associate pastor of children and families. Primary responsibilities include oversight of all 1st-6th grade

ministries and the development of ministries focused on 18-44 year olds. Shades Crest is a CBF/SBC congregation that is multi-generational, missions-minded, and family-friendly. Interested candidates should submit a resumé to: [children.minister.search@gmail.com](mailto:children.minister.search@gmail.com) by May 31.

### OTHER POSITIONS

**CLERICAL SECRETARY:** M-TH, 8-4. Paid vacation, sick time and holidays. Please mail resúmes to: Grandview Baptist Church, 2400 Forrester Road, Dothan, AL 36301.

**KEYBOARD PLAYER:** Wilton Baptist Church in Wilton, Ala. (near Montevallo), is prayerfully seeking a keyboard player. Send resúmes to: [gregsellers@yahoo.com](mailto:gregsellers@yahoo.com) or P.O. Box 160, Wilton, AL 35187.

### BUSINESS

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**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.

**HAYESVILLE, WESTERN N. CAROLINA:** Lovely, like-new mountain cottage for rent, April-November. 2 BRs, 2 BAs. All conveniences. Weekly/monthly. On beautiful Hiawassee River. Low price \$500 plus tax weekly. Sleeps five. Children welcome. No pets. 828-389-3302.

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**Moundville's New Hope celebrates 175 years**

New Hope Baptist Church, Moundville, celebrated its 175th anniversary April 26 and was "very pleased" to have a message preached by Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions Executive Director Rick Lance, said anniversary committee member Sara Brackin. Lance spoke about the importance of remembering the past and using those experiences to minister as Paul did throughout his ministry.

The Hale Baptist Association church began the celebration at 10:30 a.m. with Judson College's The Judson Singers and Handbell Ensemble performing a variety of arrangements.

Angie Cooper, Alabama Baptist Historical Commission representative, presented the church with a certificate for its years of service and four former pastors and one former pastor's widow shared about their memories of New Hope Baptist. Hale Association Director of Missions Bill Wallace also spoke.

After the covered dish lunch at noon, the New Hope choir performed special music from 1:15 to 2:30 p.m. for more than 70 participants.

Brackin said, "It was a wonderful day." (Maggie Walsh)

**New Providence commemorates 125th anniversary**

New Providence Baptist Church, Evergreen, had more than 100 participants for its 125th anniversary April 26. The service began at 10:30 a.m. and was led by former pastor Cleveland Brown who brought a message from Deuteronomy.

Dalton Campbell, Alabama Baptist Historical Commission representative, presented the Conecuh Baptist Association church with a commemorative plaque.

A fellowship lunch followed where there was a "really, really good crowd and plenty of food," according to Sherry Thomas, secretary to Pastor Mike Ellis. After lunch the congregation gathered again for a concert by Fresh Anointing, of Andalusia.

Thomas said it was a "blessed" day. (Caitlin Lea)

**Fort Payne's Mount Carmel marks 75 years**

Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Fort Payne, celebrated its 75th anniversary April 26. The 10:30 a.m. service included singers from within the church and a special message, "I Changed Not," brought by former pastor Billy Wallace.

The Dekalb Baptist Association church was presented with a plaque from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission for its years of ministry.

Following the service, members gathered for a covered dish fellowship meal before meeting again for a picture presentation of the history of the church. During the presentation former pastors shared memories of the church and it was "just a wonderful atmosphere," said church secretary Wilma Bullard. (Caitlin Lea)

# 'For the sake of the gospel'

## Brook Hills moves Secret Church after security threat

By Maggie Walsh  
The Alabama Baptist

After a security threat which one source identified as a bomb threat was made to The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham, the Secret Church event, "Christ, Culture and a Call to Action," that was scheduled for April 24 was moved to three different locations in order to accommodate the approximately 2,000 registered participants. Around 10:30 a.m. the threat was called in to Brook Hills causing an evacuation of about 150 people including pre-kindergarten children and bringing police and fire personnel to the scene.

At press time, Radical officials were unable to comment on the nature or source of the threat since the investigation is ongoing.

### Discipleship resources

Secret Church was organized by Radical, International Mission Board President David Platt's nonprofit organization that seeks to provide discipleship resources to churches and has roots in Brook Hills, where Platt previously served as pastor. Platt also was the featured speaker for the event, simulcasting from an undisclosed local church.

According to a post on Radical's blog, "the leadership at

Brook Hills thought it wise to exercise caution and cancel the gathering on their campus. However, they, along with the team here at Radical, felt that the message was important enough that every effort should be made to continue with the simulcast."

Philadelphia Baptist Church and Christ Church United Methodist, both in Birmingham, were already slated to host simulcasts of the event and each accepted a portion of the Brook Hills participants. Valleydale Church, Birmingham, was not originally scheduled to host the simulcast, however.

Valleydale Pastor Jason Dees said, "We just heard about the potential to be a host site literally two hours before the doors were to open." Despite the short notice, Valleydale hosted more than 400 participants for the event and

Hoover police officers provided security.

"When we heard [Brook Hills] had a need, we were going to do whatever we could to make the night a success for the sake of the gospel and for the glory of Christ. ... We want to do whatever we

can to help out another church or ministry that lifts up high the name of Jesus," Dees said.

Worldwide, Secret Church 2015 had more

than 55,000 people participate via simulcast from all 50 states and more than 100 countries.

Angela Stewart, communications director for Radical, said the security threat has prompted some considerations but will not prevent future events.

"The events of [April 24] definitely will have some impact but we're in the process of analyzing that and looking forward to future simulcasting," she said. ☩

**For more information about Secret Church, visit [www.radical.net](http://www.radical.net).**

## REFLECTIONS

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Hebrews 11:6

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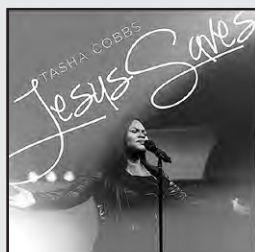
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## TOP 8

downloaded songs in April

## CHRISTIAN &amp; GOSPEL



1. **Jesus Saves (Live)**  
By Tasha Cobbs  
(Jesus Saves — Single)



2. **Touch the Sky**  
By Hillsong UNITED  
(Empires)



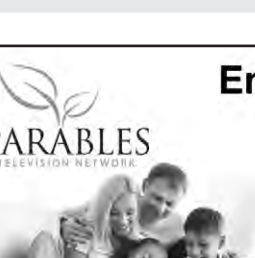
3. **Soul On Fire**  
By Third Day  
(Lead Us Back: Songs of Worship)



4. **How Can It Be**  
By Lauren Daigle  
(How Can It Be)



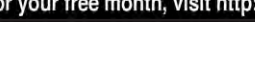
5. **Holy Spirit**  
By Francesca Battistelli  
(If We're Honest)



6. **Broken Together**  
By Casting Crowns  
(Thrive)



7. **Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)**  
By Hillsong UNITED  
(Zion)



8. **Drops In the Ocean**  
By Hawk Nelson  
(Diamonds)

Source: iTunes

## Media reviews

## Read Matthew to Live Your Life, Read John to Save Your Soul: The Best Advice I Ever Got

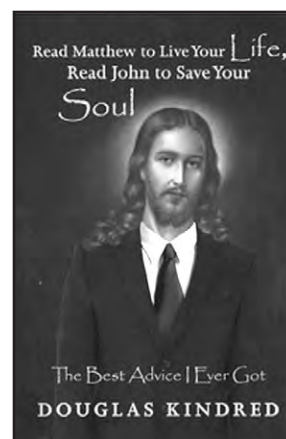
Douglas Kindred. Bloomington, Ind.: Westbow Press, 2014. 126 pp. (Paperback).

I like the title of this book; am I the only one who had never heard this? It is an odd title for a book, but one that will be remembered. Probably longer than the contents of the book. The book is not bad, but there is not a lot in it that I expect to stick with me, either.

As you might have guessed the book is divided into two parts, an exposition of Matthew and one of John. After introducing himself and sharing some interesting things about his life, Kindred launches into Matthew, explaining that the book is “Jesus teaching us how to live our lives, how to relate to God and to one another and what He expects of us.”

The author does basically the same thing with John, pointing out that John describes “who Jesus is and why He came.” The author makes many good (but familiar) points and shows himself to be well versed in biblical studies.

So why did I struggle to get through the book? The message is sound. The book is well edited. I actually read it twice, looking for the reason. In the end, I think it is a combination of a style that is a bit bland and an organizational structure that allows the reader to get lost.



## The Princess Spy

Melanie Dickerson. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2014. 293 pp. (Paperback).

Huntsville author Melanie Dickerson writes books billed as “teen fiction.” I am far from a teen, but I have loved the two books of hers I have read recently. The books are part of the Fairy Tale Romance Series, which are retellings of fairy tales set in medieval times.

The books have everything — great stories, a Christian message that permeates without being “preachy,” believable characters and even rich, beautiful covers. “The Princess Spy” is the story of a young girl who



discovers a plot by an Englishman to take over the holdings of her father and joins forces with a young (handsome, of course) Englishman to save her family and her family’s land. While we know how all fairy tales turn out, this one has enough imaginative plot twists along the way to that “happily ever after” to keep the reader on the edge of her seat.

Do I sound like a fan? I should. I am not sure how I managed to miss this award-winning author for so long. I will be buying her books for my granddaughter — and “previewing” them before Sofia gets them.

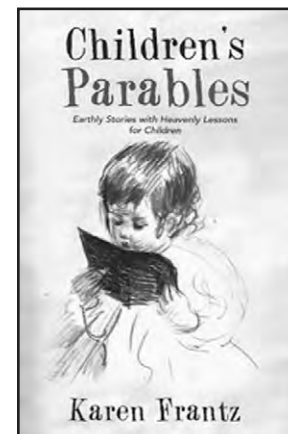
## Children’s Parables: Earthly Stories With Heavenly Lessons

Karen Frantz. Bloomington, Ind.: Westbow Press, 2014. 154 pp. (Hardback).

Karen Frantz tells stories to children at her church in Jackson’s Gap on Sundays. From reading the stories in “Children’s Parables,” I expect story time is a highlight of the week for many of the children at the church.

This little book is a collection of stories intended to communicate biblical truths to children. The stories are short, use children as their main characters and each ends with a Bible verse that ties back to the story. The stories are imaginative and varied, and seem likely to appeal to young children.

Curiously, the book has no introduction and no foreword. One or both would have been useful for the reader, who might be interested in a little more information about the author or her suggestions for using the stories. Also a few suggestions for discussion with children after each story would have been helpful. 📖



## Meet the reviewer

Martine Bates Sharp, Ed.D., reviews books and movies for The Alabama Baptist. She is a university professor and retired principal. She is a member of Central Baptist Church, Decatur.



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BGR photo

Caring for cows teaches homeless boys at the Naivasha Children's Shelter in Naivasha, Kenya, responsibility and animal husbandry while also providing much-needed milk for the shelter's students and staff.

# Learning from **COWS**

## Cows provide milk, skill training for Kenyan shelter boys

**R**onald, 16, squeezes through a wooden fence to get closer to Kandogo, a cow under his care at the Naivasha Children's Shelter in Naivasha, Kenya. He carries a white plastic bucket, which he will fill with milk for use in the day's "chai," a kind of tea.

This is one of Ronald's jobs — caring for the two cows Baptist Global Response (BGR) and Global Hunger Relief donated to the shelter that offers homeless boys love, education and skills training. Caring for cows teaches Ronald responsibility and animal husbandry while also providing much-needed milk for the shelter's students and staff.

Ronald appreciates the milk, too. He said the daily tea helps him focus on his main discipline: carpentry.

"Drinking chai helps me if I am feeling tired from doing carpentry in the morning," Ronald said. "After I drink the chai, I feel strong again and can do my work very well."

Ronald's life didn't always include cows and carpentry. His mother died three years ago, when he was just 13, and he moved in with his older sister in Nairobi. However, his sister had to care for him, his siblings and her own child, and she didn't make enough money to provide for all of them. Eventually Ronald wound up living on the streets in a Nairobi slum, begging for money and then using it to buy drugs.

After a year on the streets a friend who lived in

another children's home decided Ronald needed help and took the teen addict back to the facility where the friend stayed. There Ronald received treatment for his addictions and then he moved into the Naivasha Children's Shelter. This organization's goal is to help the boys in its care heal from their emotional wounds and then reintegrate into their families.

Now Ronald has a home, a discipline and a cow for which to care. The latter two teach him skills he needs to become self-reliant when he leaves the shelter.

"This work can help me in my future," he said of his milking chore.

That simple, mundane work is important to Ronald and the sweet chai is important to all the shelter's boys.

Various aid groups report an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 Kenyan children are homeless, and more than 60,000 of them live in Nairobi. Many of these children turn to drugs as a way to cope with constant pain, violence and hunger.

Naivasha Children's Shelter rehabilitates 30 street boys per year ranging in age from 7 to 14, and it reunites them with their families. The facility reaches out to boys while they are still on the streets, building relationships with them through feeding programs, counseling and sports. BGR contributes to this effort by providing for certain needs, like cows and a fishpond. The cows and fish give the shelter food and income while also offering the boys opportunities to learn about agriculture. (BGR)

**For more information  
about BGR, visit [gobgr.org](http://gobgr.org).**

## PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



### Persecution increases for Christians in China

BEIJING, China — Persecution of Christians in China reached its highest level in more than a decade in 2014 as the government cracked down on church growth perceived as a threat to Communist Party power, according to a U.S.-based advocacy group.

Texas-based China Aid Association (CAA) recently reported 572 cases of religious — mainly Christian — persecution in 2014, a 300 percent increase over the previous year's 143 cases. The number of people affected in those cases jumped from 7,424 to 17,884 people. More than 1,592 were church leaders, compared with 800 the previous year, CAA reported.

"The increase in government-sanctioned persecution against religious practitioners and human rights lawyers and advocates reflects the overall political transformation that is occurring within the Communist Party in China, namely an orchestrated effort to ... suppress dissent and any perceived threats to the Chinese government, including the growth of religion in China," CAA reported.

Among church leaders persecuted, 449 were detained, compared with 54 in 2013, according to the report. In 2014 the number of people sentenced for activity related to their faith reached 1,274, compared with just 12 in 2013.

Overall, in six categories — numbers of religious persecution cases, people persecuted for their religion, people detained, people sentenced, severe abuse cases and individuals severely abused — persecution in 2014 increased 152.74 percent compared with 2013, CAA reported. (MS)

### Church members attacked by Hindu mob, flee village

AMTOLA, India — Church members have fled a village in northeast India after a vicious attack that seriously injured at least three Christians including a 7-year-old girl.

A mob of about 100 Hindu extremists armed with swords, bamboo sticks and stones attacked Christians who were eating after a service April 17 at 8 p.m. in Amtola village, Golpara District, Assam, church leaders said. At least 15 Christians were injured, many of them wounded on their heads and upper bodies.

"Right now there are no Christians in the village — all have fled," said David Boro, of Guwahati. "The Christian families who were the main target of the attack are now in a safe house after they were released from the hospital. The more critically injured are still in the hospital and when ... released, they too will join the others in the safe house."

The village is no longer safe, and the families have no homes to go back to, church leaders said.

Another Christian leader, Kamleshwar Baglary, said, "Not satisfied with merely beating the Christians, the mob led by Hindu extremists broke and destroyed the homes of these Christian families. All together, five houses have been completely destroyed."

The 7-year-old girl, Pranita Rabha, suffered serious chest injuries and clots in her brain due to the beating, church leaders said. She and two other Christians were rushed to Guwahati, the state capital, for medical treatment at Guwahati Medical College. (MS)

### Protestants jailed for exercising religious freedom

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan — Three Protestants were jailed in different parts of Uzbekistan in March and April for between seven and 15 days as punishment for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief, local Protestants said. A Tashkent Region court also fined one of the prisoners of conscience — Baptist Doniyor Akhmedov — more than three years' official minimum wage after his release from 15 days in jail.

The two other prisoners of conscience known to have been jailed for short periods in March and April for exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief were a Protestant in Bukhara who received seven days of imprisonment for "illegal" religious activity and another Protestant elsewhere in Uzbekistan who received 10 days of imprisonment for "teaching religion illegally," according to fellow Protestants who wished to remain unnamed. They declined to reveal the identity of those short-term prisoners for fear they might suffer further state reprisals.

Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses are fined frequently and occasionally given short-term prison sentences in the Central Asia country. (F18)