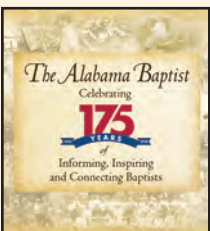


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Travis Coleman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Prattville, delivers the president's address at the 2015 Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting. Coleman will conclude his time as state convention president at the close of the upcoming annual meeting (Nov. 15–16) in Montgomery.

'Impressed — WITH — stewardship'



Photo by Neisha Roberts

After two years of seeing Alabama Baptists at work, Coleman to pass gavel

By Grace Thornton
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Come Nov. 16, it'll be time for Travis Coleman to hand over the gavel as Alabama Baptist State Convention president. And when he does he'll do it with a sense of joy at what he's seen God do in the past two years.

"It is such a blessing to see Alabama Baptists working together in partnership," said Coleman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Prattville.

Behind the scenes work

"It's so rewarding watching them come together for the cause of the Kingdom and use their abilities and interests for a common cause — to see Christ proclaimed and lives transformed and make a difference in our generation."

As he has traveled the state this year, Coleman said he's loved attending meetings and watching state missionaries at work behind

the scenes of Alabama Baptist life.

And, he said, he's been impressed with their stewardship.

"They have to make hard decisions because of funding, but they are working hard to make the name of Christ known through whatever assignment they have," he said. "I've been very impressed with how our Cooperative Program monies are used wisely — there's careful thought to this. Across the board, I see our men and women taking seriously the stewardship of that money."

And at the 2016 state convention annual meeting, messengers will get to hear the "wonderful stories of lives being changed" through the careful use of those funds, Coleman said.

"It's not just the numbers we'll hear — it's people telling stories of how Christ has made a difference in their life," he said.

Coleman said he wanted to applaud Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM), along with SBOM's office of global missions

and Alabama Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) for their diligent work in putting together the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

The new offering, collected all year but emphasized for the first time this year in mid-September with a week of prayer, funds Alabama WMU, disaster relief, church planting, church revitalization and global partnership missions.

"What a win-win for Alabama Baptists," Coleman said. "And what an impact it could have as we give more money."

Because of SBOM's hard work in promoting the offering, Coleman said his church gave

more in the week of prayer than they did for both the last WMU and disaster relief offerings combined.

"I know for us the publicity pieces and videos used to express the heart behind the offering made a difference in understanding," he said.

Lance said he appreciated Coleman's encouragement during his two years of service.

"Travis Coleman is a 21st century

Barnabas," he said. "He has a ministry of encouragement to people of all walks of life and those from all age groups. His servant-spirit has been a noteworthy example for us all."

Coleman has been attentive to the responsibilities of representing state ministry, Lance said. "Alabama Baptists have been served well by Dr. Travis Coleman as our president."

And Coleman said he's been grateful for the opportunity to do just that.

"I've appreciated being an ambassador for the State Board of Missions and state convention," Coleman said. "It's been a privilege to serve these two years and get to go around the state in various capacities speaking, attending conferences and having the opportunity to preach."

He also said he's grateful for the support he's had back home.

'Greater family'

"I also appreciate First Baptist Church, Prattville, and the patience and support of the church and staff members while I've been away to serve the greater family of Alabama Baptists," he said.

The upcoming state convention annual meeting is set for Nov. 15–16 at Eastmont Baptist Church, Montgomery. For more information, visit www.alsbom.org/convention.

**"[Coleman's]
servant spirit has
been a noteworthy
example for us all."**

**Rick Lance
SBOM executive director**

TAB

THE ALABAMA BAPTIST

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

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The Shard

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Making Christ known in cities may be avenue for worldwide change

By Bob Terry
Editor, The Alabama Baptist

Phil Barnard describes London as a "post-Christian society." Then with determination in his voice, he quickly adds, "And my task is to help our churches turn the situation around."

Barnard is regional minister and team leader for the London (England) Baptist Association. He came to the task earlier this year after almost 10 years as pastor of Mitcham Lane Baptist Church where he helped the congregation grow in attendance, baptisms and financial strength.

But Barnard had a call from God to help the 300-plus Baptist churches in London that cooperate with the Baptist Union of Great Britain to take seriously the adopted goal of "reaching London for Christ." Barnard hopes to emphasize Christian discipleship, which he calls the only way to have a "transformational impact in a post-Christian, multifaith setting."

That is a God-sized task. According to statistics, London proper is home to about 8.5 million people. Metropolitan London (inside the su-

perhighways that circle the city) is home to about 14 million people.

Small fraction

About 50 years ago more than 96 out of 100 people claimed identity with some form of Christian faith. Today about half that number (47.8 percent) say they are Christian in the best sense of the term. Evangelical believers make up only a small fraction of that percentage. Some say only 2 percent are evangelical believers today.

At the same time those who report no religious faith have climbed from 3.2 percent in

1963 to 44.7 percent in 2015.

Other world religions now account for 7.5 percent of Britain's population, up from 0.6 percent in 1963.

That means there are more people in London who reject a Christian heritage than there are who embrace it.

To call London diverse is an understatement. The area is home to more than 270 nationalities with more than 300 languages spoken, according to the *Guardian* newspaper. There are more than 50 ethnic groups with 10,000 or more people. The International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist

Convention (SBC) reports 66 unreached people groups in London, the second-highest concentration of such people in the world.

IMB also reports 28 unengaged people groups in London.

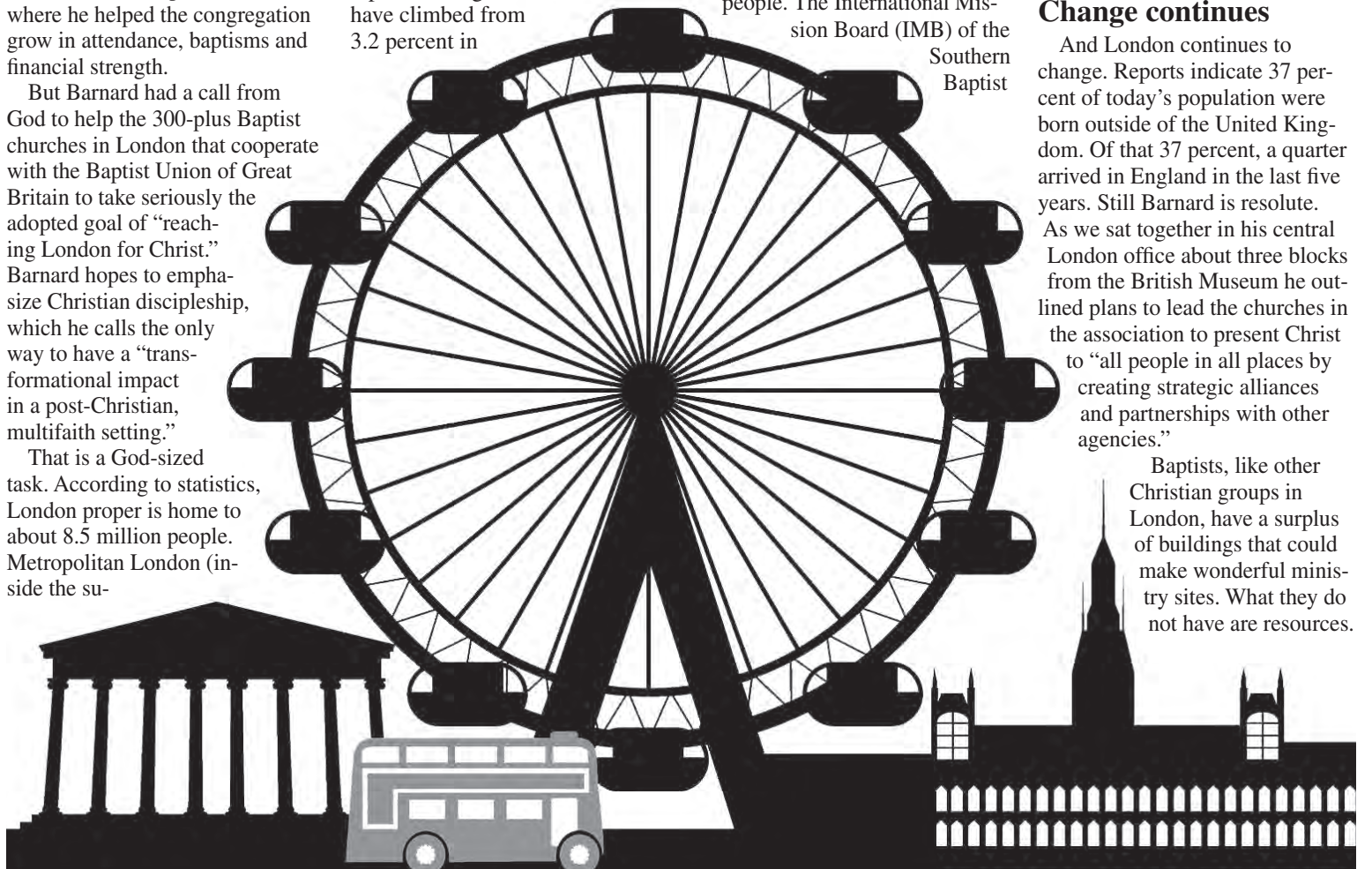
The *Guardian* article declared, "Virtually every race, nation, culture and religion in the world can claim at least a handful of Londoners."

That is why some refer to this largest city in Western Europe as "The Capital of the World." *Forbes Magazine* ranked London as the most influential city in the world.

Change continues

And London continues to change. Reports indicate 37 percent of today's population were born outside of the United Kingdom. Of that 37 percent, a quarter arrived in England in the last five years. Still Barnard is resolute. As we sat together in his central London office about three blocks from the British Museum he outlined plans to lead the churches in the association to present Christ to "all people in all places by creating strategic alliances and partnerships with other agencies."

Baptists, like other Christian groups in London, have a surplus of buildings that could make wonderful ministry sites. What they do not have are resources.



“We must always tell our neighbors about Jesus and lead believers to become disciples of our Lord.”

Phil Barnard
London Baptist Association

The 300-plus Baptist churches have a total membership of about 25,000. That means most of the churches are small-membership congregations. One study reported that London’s Christian churches average about 20 people in attendance.

Barnard shared that some Baptist congregations failed to sufficiently emphasize evangelism and discipleship in past years.

‘Good works’

He recalled one church that for more than a decade sponsored a methadone clinic as an outreach to its community. When the methadone clinic closed, the church was left with only a handful of aging members because the church had not practiced evangelism. The church had anticipated its “good works” would be enough to attract new members but that was wrong, he said.

“It is necessary to live out the compassion of Christ for all people,” Barnard declared. During his pastorate, Mitcham Lane Church sponsored a community garden and founded an organization called Christians Against Poverty.

“But we must always tell our neighbors about Jesus and lead believers to become disciples of our Lord,” he explained.

Only months into his new role as regional minister and team leader of the association Barnard has already put his vision into practice. He shared about a group of evangelical believers who had a vision of working with college students and young adults in a particular community.

Baptists had a church building nearby but few other resources. After a period of negotiation the church building became home for the new group and the church’s members were given opportunity to become part of a new ministry.

Barnard explained that with the task so great and the resources so few, there is no time to argue

about denominational differences. The goal is to proclaim Jesus is Lord.

Future partnerships might be possible with Southern Baptist representatives working in London. Some representatives work with unreached people groups living in metropolitan London. Others are part of a new program called Global Cities Initiatives.

Around the world people are moving to the cities in record number. In response, the IMB has identified five world cities, including London, for special emphasis. Representatives in London often relate to religious charities and openly live in the country as religious workers.

Seizing opportunities

In parts of the city Southern Baptist representatives share their faith openly trying to make friends with college students and young adults, networking where possible, starting Bible studies and taking advantage of every opportunity to share Christ.

Working with college students is a possible place of cooperation. Student work is a high priority for SBC representatives, a group of state paper editors were told during a visit in late September. London Baptist Association has established work in more than a dozen area colleges and universities.

Barnard said he had been approached by one representative about the possibility of cooperation and he looks forward to future conversations.

“We look forward to work-

ing with groups that are Christ-centered and biblically driven,” he said. “If each shares his strength then we can each give God and one another our best efforts. That is the best way to make disciples for our Lord.”

Other representatives have a more guarded identity because they work among people groups that have been resistant to the gospel historically. In parts of the city Pakistani Muslims are the

We walked past churches — Presbyterian, Church of God. The Baptist church was a few streets over.

The most memorable part of the day was sitting in a shop with a Christian believer from a Hindu background. The woman described her journey to becoming a Christian and the long, painful process of telling her family about her newfound faith.

For years her family persecuted

majority population. In other places it is Bengalis, Tamils, Hindus, Poles or another of the many ethnic groups.

One day during my September visit I walked around part of the city with an SBC representative working with a Code 3 security clearance — no names, no pictures, no direct references. We walked through an area inhabited primarily by Sikhs. We visited Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, the second largest Sikh temple in the world. We talked with a Sikh priest and other friends of this worker.

We walked along streets adorned with all the rudiments of a street in India from food to fashion.

her and her sister, also a Christian believer. But now her mother helps promote evangelistic events that the daughter sponsors each year in their home village back in India.

The SBC representative is making inroads in the Sikh community, partly because of being fluent in their language and partly because of skills like the ability to listen and to make friends for the gospel.

‘In all places’

There are others like my host that day who work among unreached people groups across the city. With the London Baptist Association, they share the common goal of making Christ known “in all places to all people.”

Walking a busy London street or riding the iconic “tube,” it was impossible not to be dazzled by the different dress and customs, the variety of foods, the varying skin tones and the number of languages one hears. London really is the world’s gathering place.

Reach London with the gospel, and one just might reach the rest of the world.

That is Barnard’s goal and the goal of the churches in the London Baptist Association. And that is the goal of SBC representatives ministering in the London area. It is good to know we are not alone in the work. God has provided potential partners if we are wise enough to seize the opportunity. ✠



Big Ben

IMB photo

New initiative partners IMB, local church

Cities like London are growing at a breathtaking speed — 1.5 million people are moving into cities every week. This represents a new Singapore or a new San Francisco every month, all over the world,” McKenzie “Mac” Pier said at a recent conference in New York City on reaching cities for Christ.

Pier, founder and CEO of The New York Leadership Center, cited the rapid growth

to underscore the importance of focusing on urban ministries in large cities. It’s vital, he said.

And it’s a strategy the International Mission Board (IMB) has recently implemented through the Global Cities Initiative.

Leveraging skills

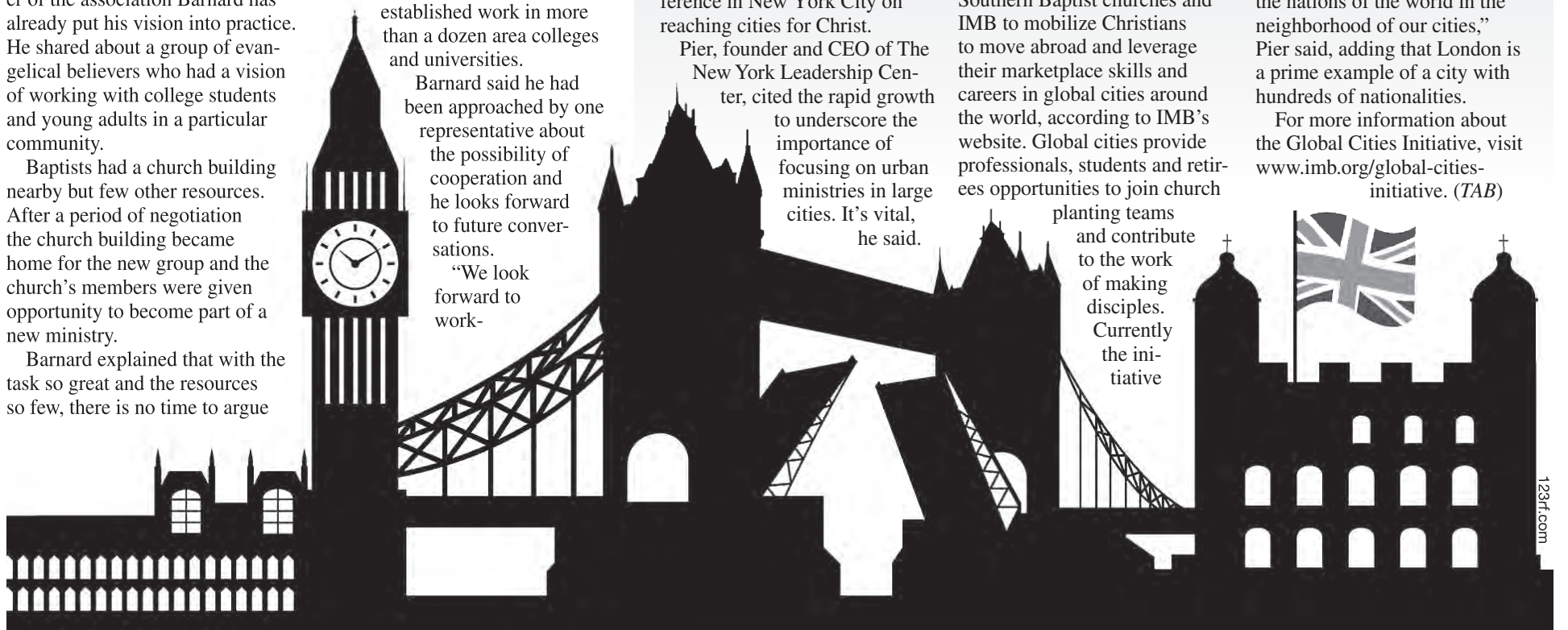
The Global Cities Initiative is a partnership between local Southern Baptist churches and IMB to mobilize Christians to move abroad and leverage their marketplace skills and careers in global cities around the world, according to IMB’s website. Global cities provide professionals, students and retirees opportunities to join church

planting teams and contribute to the work of making disciples. Currently the initiative

includes Dubai, Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai and London.

“In the words of Tim Keller: ‘The Church, despite its growth, is not growing fast enough to (meet) the great unmet needs of our cities.’ God is disrupting the world by choreographing the nations of the world in the neighborhood of our cities,” Pier said, adding that London is a prime example of a city with hundreds of nationalities.

For more information about the Global Cities Initiative, visit www.imb.org/global-cities-initiative. (TAB)



Storied history of ‘unbroken ministry’



First-ever history book of *The Alabama Baptist* now available for pre-order

After 175 years of continuous ministry, the first book devoted to the history of *The Alabama Baptist* newspaper will be published in a four-color fully illustrated book to be released September 2017.

“It is unusual for a weekly publication to have an unbroken ministry for 175 years,” observed Bob Terry, editor of *The Alabama Baptist*. “Only the blessings of God, the hard work of those associated with the paper and the graciousness of Alabama Baptists made this possible.”

‘Instrument of great power’

In 1843 when the paper was first published in Marion, Alabama Baptists described the new publication through a resolution as “an instrument of great power in promotion of the best interests of the denomination and in advancing the cause of Christ at large.”

At the same meeting messengers voted that “*The Alabama Baptist* be employed by the officer of this convention as the organ through which they shall confer with the churches connected with this body.”

From that time to this, *The Alabama Baptist* and the Alabama Baptist State Convention have worked together for the benefit of cooperating churches and the convention itself.

While covering wars, political upheaval,

Wells to author *TAB* history

A veteran historian, Elizabeth Wells is a retired archivist for Samford University and librarian for its Special Collection and Archives department in Birmingham.

Wells served as chair of the department for 38 years. In 2013 she received the Marvin Yeomans Whiting Award from the Society of Alabama Archivists for significant contributions to the preservation and dis-



WELLS

semination of local history in Alabama.

She also received the Virginia Hamilton Award by the Alabama Historical Association in 2015 for her contributions in promoting Alabama history.

Wells holds a bachelor’s degree from Judson College, a master’s degree in history from Auburn University and a master’s degree in library science from the University of Alabama. (*TAB*)

depression, cultural changes, civil rights, technology shifts and more, *The Alabama Baptist* has served its readers with the three-fold mission of informing for perspective and understanding, inspiring for growth as Christian disciples and connecting Baptists for missions and ministry.

Focus on stories

Each week the paper reports events from the world of religion, provides practical helps for everyday problems, examines moral and ethical issues from a biblical perspective, shares resources for Christian

living, undergirds what Baptists do together and imparts information of God’s work through Baptists at home and around the world.

Now that storied history of this valuable ministry will be told in a 208-page coffee table style book. Its design is to focus on the stories of Alabama Baptists with the history of the publication itself weaved into the stories.

Elizabeth Wells, retired archivist for Samford University and librarian for its Special Collection and Archives department in Birmingham, is currently writing this

intriguing history. Wells has written two institutional history books and authored numerous historical articles. Interestingly, her master’s thesis at Auburn University was about the founding of *The Alabama Baptist*.

“I love the stories of *The Alabama Baptist*,” Wells said. “I have read them for years and now I get to share them with everyone through this first book devoted to the paper’s history.”

The working title of the new book is “The Alabama Baptist: Celebrating 175 Years of Informing, Inspiring and Connecting Baptists.” It will be released in hardback and paperback versions.

Pre-orders are already being received.

Terry said, “Pre-orders guide us in knowing how many books to publish. We don’t want to end up with extra copies in a warehouse or overprint hardback versions when Baptists want the paperback edition.”

Free shipping

Cost of the book is \$34.95 in hardback and \$24.95 in paperback.

To encourage pre-orders, free shipping and handling (a \$7 value) is being offered until Dec. 24.

“I have read the drafts of the early chapters,” Terry said. “Anyone interested in what God has done through Baptists in Alabama and around the world will find this an exciting read.” (*TAB*)

Order Form: *The Alabama Baptist: 175 Years*

To order your book simply fill out the form below and mail to: *The Alabama Baptist* 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. You also may call 1-800-803-5201 or order online at www.thealabamabaptist.org.

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Irish bakers fined for marriage convictions

BELFAST, Ireland — Daniel and Amy McArthur, owners of Ashers Bakery in Belfast, Ireland, lost their court appeal Oct. 24 after a three-judge panel ruled that the couple was guilty of discrimination after refusing to bake a pro-gay “marriage” cake in 2014.

Despite the family’s religious beliefs, according to the court, businesses are not allowed to refuse services they willingly offer to the public when certain messages contradict their deeply held convictions, The Christian Post reported.

The court’s ruling stated the “supplier may provide the particular service to all or to none but not to a selection of customers based on prohibited grounds. ... What they may not do is provide a service that only reflects their own religious message in relation to sexual orientation.”

The cake order in question was made by gay activist Gareth Lee. Lee wanted a cake featuring Sesame Street characters Bert and Ernie with the slogan “Support Gay Marriage” on the top.

After being fined \$600 from a ruling in Belfast County Court, the McArthurs filed an appeal in May 2016.

After losing the appeal, Daniel McArthur said the law “needs to change” if it leads to punishment of those who politely refuse to support political causes that a person or company doesn’t agree with, according to The Post.

“The ruling undermines democratic freedom, undermines religious freedom and undermines freedom of speech,” he said. (TAB)

Vatican prohibits scattering of cremation ashes

VATICAN CITY — The Vatican released new rules on cremation in late October prohibiting the scattering of ashes on land or at sea, as well as keeping remains at home, according to The Christian Post.

In Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, it states that while the Church recommends burying bodies, cremation is increasingly being done in many places around the world.

“In memory of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord, the mystery that illumines the Christian meaning of death, burial is above all the most fitting way to express faith and hope in the resurrection of the body,” it explains. “In order that every appearance of pantheism, naturalism or nihilism be avoided, it is not permitted to scatter the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects.”

In Christianity, death is looked on in a positive light, because the body and soul will be united and “in the resurrection God will give incorruptible life to our body, transformed by reunion with our soul,” the document states. (TAB)

Australian city officials seek to rid town of porn

TOOWOOMBA, Australia — In an effort to fight violence against women, leaders in one Australian city are putting effort into ridding their community of porn.

Letitia Shelton, chief executive of City Women of Toowoomba, said a porn-free city “sounds very ambitious and unlikely,” according to Australia’s Huffington Post.

But if it can reduce the use of porn like anti-smoking campaigns cut smoking, that would be a victory, she said.

“Eighty-eight percent of porn displays violence against women, such as choking or gagging,” Shelton said. “We’re hearing more stories from women porn-addicted partners, where there has been a direct result of abuse from that.”

The city’s mayor, Paul Antonio, also is supporting the effort, as are other community organizations. (TAB)

Faith leaders speak out

Concern raised over Clinton’s ‘Christophobia’

An email controversy is nothing new for Hillary Clinton, but evangelical leaders are voicing their concerns and demanding an apology regarding one of the latest issue related to emails.

Banding together with Catholic leaders, the group posted an open letter Oct. 12 denouncing what they call anti-Christian bigotry in the Clinton presidential campaign.

The letter, published on Republican candidate Donald Trump’s campaign website, expressed collective outrage at “demeaning and troubling rhetoric” used by high-level Clinton campaign staffers to describe evangelical and Catholic communities.

Ronnie Floyd, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas and the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), and Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, Plano, Texas, who served as SBC president in 2003 and 2004, signed the letter, along with Richard Land, retired head of the SBC’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Other Southern Baptist signers included Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas, and Mathew Staver, director of the Liberty Council who served on the 2016 SBC Resolutions Committee. Gary Bauer, formerly with the Family Research Council and Focus on the Family and now president of American Values, also signed the letter.

The letter said the recently released emails “clearly ridicule, demean and smear Roman Catholics and evangelicals” and “reveal a contempt for all traditional Christians.”

‘Mocking’ faith

The letter came in response to documents published in early October by WikiLeaks that appear to show Clinton campaign communications director Jennifer Palmieri, a Catholic, joking about evangelicals and Catholics in emails sent to John Podesta, chairman of Clinton’s campaign and subject of the hack reportedly being investigated as a possible Russian cyberattack.

Palmieri and American Progress fellow John Halpin allegedly mocked conservative Catholicism as an “amazing bastardization

of the faith” while also attacking Christians, according to news reports.

According to an article on www.breitbart.com, Podesta and Sandy Newman, president of Voices for Progress, emailed back and forth in 2012 about how to “plant seeds of revolution” within the Catholic Church. The timing was noted as being connected to when Catholic bishops were expressing opposition to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) contraceptive mandate in the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare).

Catholic leader Frank Cannon, president of American Principles Project, said on thepulse2016.com that the content of the leaked emails should not surprise anyone.

“Hillary Clinton’s anti-religious freedom policies aim to segregate people of faith away from the public square,” Cannon wrote. “Given these radical, anti-religious positions, it’s not a shock to find out that Clinton’s top staffers hold bigoted, anti-Christian views.”

“It is also concerning that ... Podesta ... is attempting to divide the Catholic Church through a series of front groups, which aim to pit Catholic against Catholic by encouraging practicing Catholics to deny Catholic doctrine,” Cannon added.

“These emails reveal a bigoted, anti-Christian attitude held by those who will be managing the day-to-day activities of our country if Clinton is elected. Catholics and evangelicals should keep this in mind as they head to the voting booth in November.”

Ashley McGuire, senior fellow with The Catholic Association, told Breitbart News that Clinton also is on record as saying “deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs have to be changed” to make abortion more acceptable.

The religious leaders signing the open letter called on the former secretary of state “to immediately

apologize for the Christophobic behavior of her associates.”

The term “Christophobia” was tied to Clinton and President Barack Obama in September by Christian author and humanitarian Johnnie Moore in an interview with Newsmax Prime on Newsmax TV.

The phrase also is similar to one used by sociologists David Williamson and George Yancey in their book “So Many Christians,

So Few Lions: Is There Christianophobia in the United States?”

Moore accused Obama and Clinton of sitting “on their hands while hundreds of thousands, if not millions and millions, of Christians have been displaced and killed” during the recent refugee crisis in the Middle East.

Moore told

J.D. Hayworth, host of Newsmax Prime, “If you support Christians who have been the recipients of genocide in the Middle East, you’re called Islamophobic and it’s just incomprehensible.”

‘Global war’

“The Obama/Clinton administration has been party to the most systematic dismantling of religious freedom in this country,” he said. “If I’m going to be accused of Islamophobia just by speaking up for Christians ... what about people that are anti-Christian?” he asked.

“If you’re anti-Christian, henceforth you are guilty of Christophobia. You are a Christophobe.”

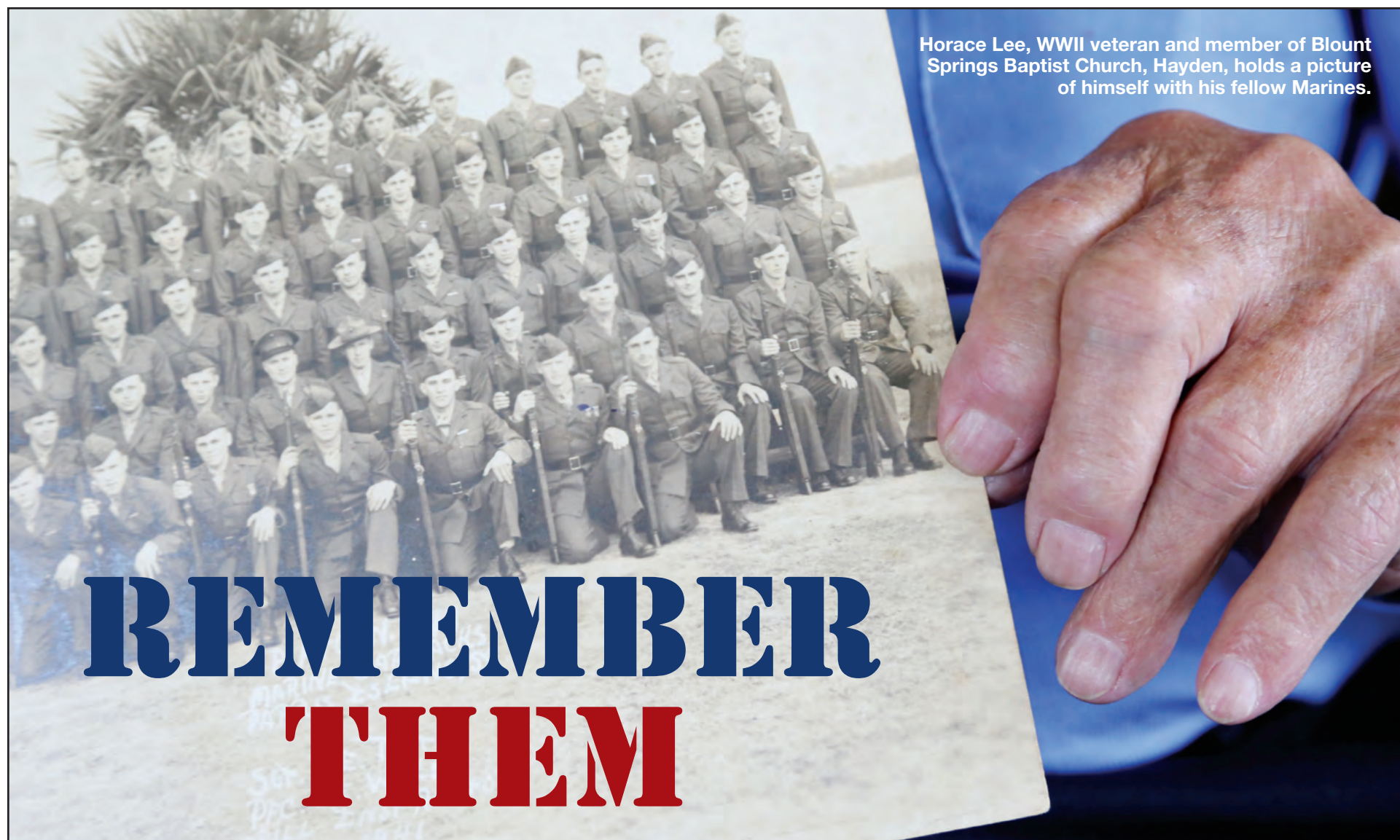
“There is a global war on Christians and we’ve got to do more about it. And if you don’t do something about it, you’re guilty of Christophobia,” he said.

Floyd told the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* on Oct. 17, “This election is not about these two personalities as much as it is about the future of America,” he said. “The key is not whom we endorse, but which of these two candidates believe and practice.” (TAB, BNG)



CLINTON

Veterans Day 2016



Horace Lee, WWII veteran and member of Blount Springs Baptist Church, Hayden, holds a picture of himself with his fellow Marines.

Photo by Neisha Roberts

REMEMBER THEM

Practical ways your congregation can encourage, support, honor veterans

By Denise George
Special to The Alabama Baptist

On Nov. 11, Veterans Day, we have the opportunity to pause and express appreciation and gratitude to our nation's war veterans, military service members, chaplains and their families. The Veterans Day observance began almost 100 years ago, when on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, Allied nations and Germany called an armistice, temporarily ending hostilities in World War I. In 1938, Veterans Day became a legal federal holiday in the United States.

War veterans are everywhere — living, working and worshipping quietly among us in our homes, communities, workplaces and churches. Oftentimes we aren't aware of them or their service and sacrifice in keeping our country safe. Here are some practical ways congregations can remember, honor and thank those special men and women who have served, are currently serving and who minister to our military service members:

1. On the Sunday before or after Nov. 11, plan a service to celebrate the veterans in your congregation. Invite them to wear their uniforms if they wish to, but refrain from asking them to stand during the service. Some veterans have suffered greatly, both mentally and physically, and do not wish to be singled out and recognized. For many, the memories of war are too painful.

Suggest that your pastor pray a special prayer during the service for chaplains, active service members, veterans and their families in the church, community and nation. Invite a military chaplain, returning service member or veteran to preach the morning's message or give a brief testimony.

For more information from the North American Mission Board (NAMB) on honoring service members on Veterans Day and other occasions, visit www.namb.net/chaplaincy/honoring-military-chaplains.

2. Make a list of service members and their families in your church. With their permission, print their names in the church bulletin or newsletter and request that your congregation pray for them regularly.

3. Organize special ministries for those families with service members deployed far from home. Invite their involvement in church and family activities.

4. Hold special times of prayer during regular church services throughout the year for the United States and its leaders, as well as for world leaders and urgent global needs.

5. Contact veterans in your church and community who need assistance understanding and negotiating the Veteran Ad-

ministration maze. Supply each with a list of organizations that may help them with free medical care, legal help, job training and other needed services.

6. Educate yourself and your congregation on the unique issues and challenges facing returning war veterans and their families. Get to know the veterans in your church and community, reaching out and ministering to them.

7. As a church, financially support some of the many programs that seek to help veterans.

8. As an individual, volunteer your time to veteran organizations and community programs.

9. Visit the homebound veterans in your congregation. Talk with them, pray with them, listen to their stories and thank them for their service.

10. Write notes and letters to those currently serving in the military. Include the church's children in this project, supplying them with art supplies to draw, color or paint creative cards to send.

11. Arrange to send "care packages" from the congregation to troops overseas. The organization Hugs for Soldiers lists appropriate items to send: candy, cookies, socks, gloves, small games, etc. They also

provide current shipping information.

12. Pray for and support chaplains who provide pastoral ministry to soldiers/veterans. NAMB endorses more than 3,600 Southern Baptist chaplains serving in a variety of fields in North America, with 128 chaplains currently serving in VA hospitals.

During WWII, England's prime minister, Winston Churchill, stated: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." His statement is true today too. As Southern Baptist congregations, let us not forget to honor and thank those individuals we owe so much to.

For more information on how your church can support Military Ministry, email chaplaincy@namb.net or call 770-410-6367. For NAMB military/chaplain resources, visit www.namb.net/chaplaincy/resources. For more information on helping returning veterans, visit crumilitary.org or call 1-800-444-6006. For an educational resource for caring professionals ministering to veterans, visit ptsd.va.gov.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Denise George (www.denisegeorge.org) is the author of 30 books and co-author of "Behind Nazi Lines: My Father's Heroic Quest to Save 149 World War II POWs," recently published by Penguin Random House. She is married to Timothy George, founding dean of Samford's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham. ☛



How to contact your congressional representative

You can find all of your congressional representatives by visiting www.contactingthecongress.org and entering your address.

Start by calling your senior senator. When you call the senator's Washington office, ask who handles veterans issues there, then ask to speak to that person.

Having a high-ranking senator and his staff working on your side can open previously closed doors and fix once broken situations.

Before calling make sure you can summarize your entire situation in 30 seconds or less, ending with the question: "Can you help me?" If you can't do it in 30 seconds, practice in front of a mirror until you can.

Let the senator's veterans' advocate ask the follow-up questions. One of the first questions will be: "Do you have all of your military and VA papers, including your medical, discharge and military performance papers?" Do not call until the answer to that question is "yes."

Also once you obtain your papers, never send the originals to anyone. 🇺🇸

Source: Denise George

**"The person who went
away comes back
changed in some way.
And the idea that you
just pick up where you
left off is just not true.
The deploying soldier
has changed, the
ones who were home
have changed. So that
reintegration needs to
be done with care."**

**Rev. Stuart Kenworthy
former chaplain
Army National Guard**

Source: "Honoring Our Veterans: Faith and Family" video by Kevin Eckstrom, courtesy of Washington National Cathedral

Helpful RESOURCES

Multiple sources available to help veterans post-service

► **Disposable Warriors**
Sgt. Chuck Luther, director
www.disposablewarriors.org

Disposable Warriors assists soldiers who are being wrongfully discharged and denied benefits.

► **Soldiers' Angels**
Patti Patton-Bader, founder
210-629-0020
www.soldiersangels.org

Soldiers' Angels provides aid and comfort to the men and women of the armed forces and their families through letter writing programs, care packages and team strategies.

► **USA Cares**
1-800-773-0387
info@usacares.org
www.usacares.org

USA Cares connects directly with military families in need, providing free assistance with food, utilities, vehicle repair and rent. It also aids wounded veterans suffering from Traumatic Brain Injury and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

► **Wounded Warrior Project**
904-296-7350
www.woundedwarriorproject.org

The Wounded Warrior Project offers a wide range of assistance, from help collecting disability benefits, to help in healing PTSD wounds, to continuing education for a post-military life.

► **National Veterans Foundation**
1-888-777-4443
www.nvf.org

The National Veterans Foundation offers a range of free services to vets, including legal help, assistance with a disability claim, help finding a job, treatment for PTSD or Traumatic Brain Injury and more.

► **NextGenVets**
424-259-3803
info@nextgenvets.org
www.nextgenvets.org

NextGenVets is a job placement organization for veterans.

► **Wall Street WarFighters**
484-614-1348
www.wallstreetwarfighters.org

Wall Street WarFighters provides education and training to wounded vets so they can make the transition from the battlefield to Wall Street.

► **Farmer-Veteran Coalition**
530-756-1395
www.farmvetco.org

The Farmer-Veteran Coalition offers veterans training in becoming farmers.

► **Combat Paper Project**
Drew Cameron, project co-director
drewcameron@combatpaper.org
www.combatpaper.org

The Combat Paper Project conducts hands-on workshops across the country where veterans take their uniforms, cut them up, process them into pulp and use that pulp to create art. Veterans also get a chance to share their experiences with fellow veterans.

► **Warrior Writers Project**
Lovella Calica, project director
lovella@warriorwriters.org
www.warriorwriters.org

The Warrior Writers Project brings together recent veterans and current soldiers to express themselves through art by holding workshops across the country where soldiers write stories, create poetry and develop art projects through various mediums.

► **The Pathway Home**
Harold Flowers, case manager
1-800-404-8387
harold.flowers@thepathwayhome.org
www.thepathwayhome.org

The Pathway Home provides veterans with educational, professional and clinical support designed to help them cope with the effects of their military experience and enhance their lives following military service.

► **Lawyers Serving Warriors**
202-265-8305, ext. 152
info@nvlsp.org
www.nvlsp.org/what-we-dollawyers-serving-warriors/

Lawyers Serving Warriors is a project of National Veterans Legal Services Program that provides free legal services to U.S. military personnel and veterans who need help with disability, discharge or veterans' benefits cases.

► **National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc.**
202-587-5708
vetadvocates.org

The National Organization of Veterans' Advocates, Inc. (NOVA) is a national organization of attorneys and other qualified members who act as advocates for disabled veterans. NOVA's website features a directory of attorneys and other resources for veterans.

► **Vietnam Veterans of America**
1-800-882-1316
vva.org

The Vietnam Veterans of America connects veterans with a knowledgeable, supportive fellow veteran who can guide them through the VA system.

► **Urban Justice Center — Veteran Advocacy Project**
646-602-5620
veterans@urbanjustice.org
vap.urbanjustice.org

The Veteran Advocacy Project helps vets find housing, defends vets in Housing Court and provides assistance with medical care, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment and counseling.

EDITOR'S NOTE — List compiled by various sources courtesy of Denise George, author of 30 books and co-author of "Behind Nazi Lines: My Father's Heroic Quest to Save 149 World War II POWs." 🇺🇸



Unsplash photo/Graphic by Neisha Roberts

Across ALABAMA'S Associations

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

BALDWIN

► **Eric Hankins** is the new pastor of **First Church, Fairhope**. Hankins holds a bachelor's degree from Louisiana College in Pineville; a master's degree from New Orleans Seminary; and a doctorate from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He previously served as pastor of First Church, Oxford, Mississippi. He and his wife, Janet, have three children.



HANKINS

COLUMBIA

► **Smyrna Church, Dothan**, will celebrate its 151st homecoming Nov. 6. Sunday School will be at 9:45 a.m. and the service will be at 10:45 a.m. Bobby Anderson will speak. Frankie Money will perform special music. Lunch will follow the service. James Bell is pastor.

COFFEE

► **New Ebenezer Church, Elba**, will celebrate homecoming Nov. 6, 10:30 a.m. Larry Doster will speak. The Johnson Trio, Paul

Ayers and the church choir will perform special music. Lunch will follow the service. There will not be Sunday School or evening services. For more information call 334-400-2526. Travis Johnson is pastor.

ELMORE

► Members of **Santuck Church, Wetumpka**, and others in Charis Crafters will host the 18th annual "Home for the Holidays" craft show Nov. 10-11 at the Wetumpka Civic Center. The show will be open Nov. 10, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. and Nov. 11, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. For more information call Del Mock at 334-201-1817. B.R. Johnson is pastor.

GENEVA

► **Les Hughes** is the new pastor of **Hartford Church**. He previously served as pastor of Providence Church, Jayess, Mississippi. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Montevallo and a master's degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He and his wife, Lacey, have three children.

ST. CLAIR

► **Jerry Epps** is the new pastor of **St. Clair Springs Church, Springville**. He previously served

as pastor of Mountain View Church, Oneonta. He is married to Carolyn. ► **Gene Dobbs** is the new pastor of **Pleasant Valley Church, Pell City**. He previously served as pastor of New Hope Church, Pell City. He also served at Son Rise Church, Odenville. He is married to Louise.

SELMA

► **Tom Stacey**, who has served as **Selma Association** director of missions (DOM) for nearly 20 years, recently became DOM of **Cahaba Association** as well. Selma Association approved this



STACEY

new role at its annual meeting Oct. 17, and Cahaba Association voted in approval during its annual meeting Oct. 25. Stacey assumed the new role Nov. 1. The associations will not merge in order to maintain each association's individuality, but Stacey will oversee them both. Stacey said he looks forward to serving Cahaba Association churches. ✠



Painting captures past, funds future ministry

It was for the past and the future that local artist Sharon Owens donated a painting of Beatrice Baptist Church for the church's 175th anniversary celebration Sept. 25.

It captured history. But it also funded future ministry. The painting was sold in a silent auction, with all the proceeds going to missions.

New pew Bibles also were available for those in attendance to buy in memory or honor of someone, with the funds from that also going to missions.

During the special service, Pastor Mack Elkin shared a brief word, and Toby McPherson read the church history.

Dalton Campbell, an Alabama Baptist Historical Commission representative, presented the church with a plaque, and John Marks, director of missions for Pine Barren Baptist Association, presented a certificate.

The congregation also enjoyed a variety of special music from the church choir, the Watson Family and the Beatrice Baptist Quintet (known as BBQ), among others.

Fort Payne's Second Baptist celebrates 100 years

Rick Lance said it was a "celebration more akin to a revival service" when Second Baptist Church, Fort Payne, gathered to celebrate its 100th anniversary Sept. 18.

During the special service, Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, complemented the congregation on being a pacesetter in giving through the Cooperative Program and setting



Photo by Lonette Berg

an example as a leader in giving to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

Also during the service, Lonette Berg, executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented the church with a certificate.

Fort Payne Mayor Larry Chesser read a proclama-

tion, and state representative Nathaniel Ledbetter read a resolution honoring the church.

Those present at the service enjoyed extravagant decorations, including photos and momentos, old toys and household items from the decades and many old quilts.

David McMillen is pastor of Second Baptist.

Special service marks Owen Chapel's centennial

About 150 people gathered Sept. 11 at Owen Chapel Baptist Church, Moulton, to celebrate the church's 100th anniversary with a special service.

Robert Smith, director of missions for Muscle Shoals Baptist Association, and Tommy Appleton, a deacon at Owen Chapel Baptist, and former pastor Jim Poss were the special speakers for the service.

Jerry Armor, a representative of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented a certificate to the church, and everyone present went home with a gift bag of mementos from the occasion.

Also during the service, Kaylee Nelson read a poem commemorating the history of Owen Chapel Baptist.

Larry Davis is pastor.

Compiled by the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission and TAB

Alabama Baptists praying for country, presidential election



Photo by Maggie Walsh

Alabama Baptist associations have been holding annual meetings recently and a common theme has been prayer for the presidential election such as what took place at Salem-Troy Association's annual meeting (pictured here) at Antioch Baptist Church, Troy, on Oct. 24. Luke Lane (right), outgoing moderator and pastor of First Baptist Church, Troy, led the altar call during the meeting.

Alabama Baptist Convention **State Board of Missions**Focus
on

ONE MISSION

ONEMISSION: 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 | alsbom.org

SENT ... HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

2016 Alabama Baptist State Convention
Annual Meeting

November 15-16 at Eastmont Baptist Church,
4505 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36109

The year 2016 has been an eventful one for residents of the U.S. and Alabama with unprecedented cultural and political developments.

With increasing frequency, change seems the only constant. Even the near future has become difficult to predict as moral upheaval and cultural shifts continue on a variety of fronts.

Even with these unsettling challenges, Christians are called to abiding faithfulness and obedience to our Lord whose command to carry out the Great Commission remains unchanged.

In a couple of weeks, Alabama Baptists will be reminded of this mandate at our annual family reunion at the State Convention meeting, which will have a theme of "Sent ... Here, There and Everywhere."

This theme is a missiological reminder that we are called to go into all the world, all the time, at the same time. Acts 1:8 (HCSB) reminds us that we are to be Christ's "witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Toward that end, Alabama Baptists will hear inspirational and celebrative reports about



By Rick Lance
State Missionary

the Great Commission ministries that they support strongly through prayer, giving and going.

Through the Cooperative Program, supported by the Great Commission Ministries Budget

that messengers will be asked to adopt, Alabama Baptists have an opportunity to renew and strengthen our commitment to reaching our state and the world for Christ.

We will hear reports and recommendations on a variety of Kingdom concerns and initiatives, such as the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering. Next year's offering, like the one in this inaugural year, will provide strong support for five strategic ministries: Alabama Woman's Missionary Union, Disaster Relief, Church Planting, Church Revitalization and Global Partnership Missions.

This year, it has been so encouraging to hear reports from across the state of Alabama Baptists enthusiastically and thoughtfully supporting their first-ever state missions offering.

Also during the State Convention meeting, there will be many other times of inspiration and refreshing, including corporate worship through music and preaching, highlighting of the ministries of

Alabama Baptist entities, adoption of resolutions about matters of critical concern, and election of Convention officers and members of boards, commissions and committees.

Pray for those who are working in final preparations for the annual meeting and for those who will provide leadership during the Convention.

We hope to see you there.

For more information about the annual meeting of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, please call 1-800-264-1225, ext. 231, or go online to alsbom.org/convention.

John 17:18, 20:21

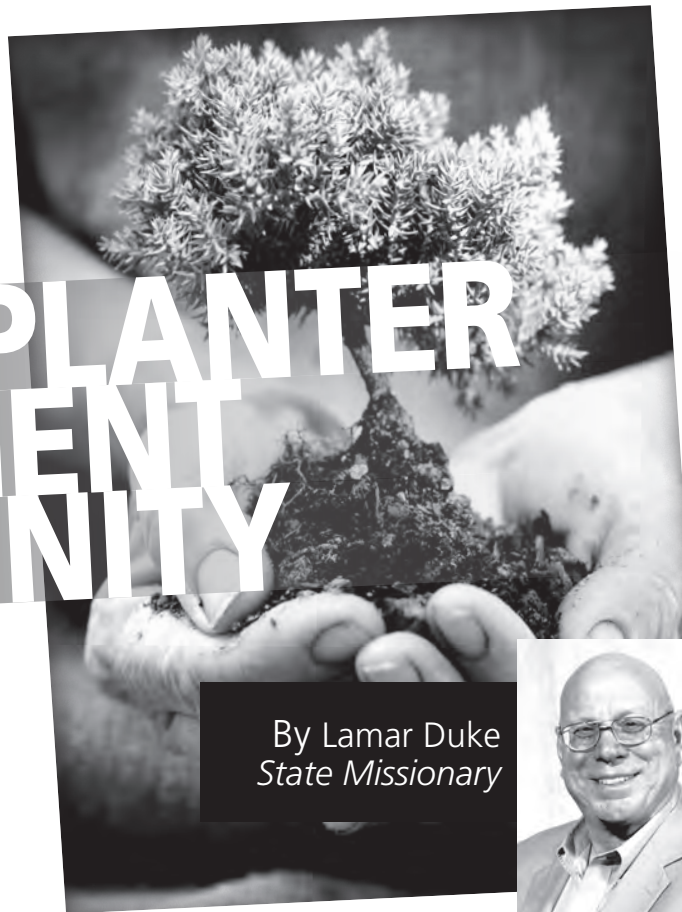
FOCUS on One Mission

**Alabama Church Planter Network
Dinner, Sunday, November 13, 2016,
Eastern Hills Baptist Church, 3604
Pleasant Ridge Rd., Montgomery**

Church planters and wives or anyone interested in church planting are invited to this event.

CHURCH PLANTER ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITY

Speaker Jeff Christopherson has a passion to see a Kingdom-centered church planting movement happen in North America. He has seen firsthand what can happen when a church gives itself away through rapid multiplication. Jeff serves as vice president of the North American Mission Board for the Send Network. He is author of *Kingdom Matrix: Designing a Church for the Kingdom of God* and *Kingdom First: Starting Churches That Shape Movements*. Jeff and his wife, Laura, live in Alpharetta, Ga., and have two children.



By Lamar Duke
State Missionary

The first 200 planters/pastors who register will receive a copy of *Kingdom First*, Jeff's latest book.

Full schedule as follows: 4:30 p.m., registration and fellowship time; 6 p.m.,

dinner; 6:30 p.m., worship led by Ingrid Brown; 6:45 p.m., inspirational message by Jeff Christopherson; 7:15 p.m., wives session, Susan Lovett, and planters session, Jeff Christopherson; 8:30 p.m., adjourn and pick up children.



Jeff Christopherson

The cost is \$25 per couple or \$15 per person.

To register or for more information about this events, please visit plantalabama.org/events.

Church planting is supported by Alabama Baptists' generous gifts through the Cooperative Program and to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

For more information about church planting among Alabama Baptists, please contact State Missionary Lamar Duke, lead church planting strategist, at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 332, or (334) 613-2332, lduke@alsbom.org.

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

Join hundreds of students and young adults along with more than 30 missionaries from around the world as we seek to find our place in His purpose.
Jeremiah 29:11-13

Featuring:

David Boudia

The Digital Age

J.D. Payne

Caleb Crider

PURSUE 2017 | MY PLACE IN HIS PURPOSE ...

First Baptist Church, Montgomery
February 17-18
pursueAL.org

FREE
ADMISSION

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
PELHAM

2017 State Evangelism Conference

February 27 & 28, 2017

Monday at 6:15 p.m. • Tuesday at 8:45 a.m.



EVANGELISM RESURGENCE

Does your church have an effective evangelism strategy?

Speakers

Chuck Kelley
Josh McDowell
Chad Burdette
Larry Robertson
James Merritt
Joel Carwile
Blake Newsom
Kenny Grant

Special Music

First Baptist
Pelham Choir
Wes Hampton
Enon Baptist Choir

For More Information,
contact Ministry Assistant
Amy Nelson at 1-800-264-1225,
ext. 258, or (334) 613-2258,
anelson@alsbom.org

Senior Adult Singin'

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Hunter Street Baptist Church, Hoover
10 a.m. - Noon

COST: \$10 per person (includes lunch)

Psalm 96:1-2 (NIV) says to

*"Sing to the Lord a new
song, sing to the Lord,
all the earth. Sing to the
Lord, praise his name,
proclaim his salvation
day after day."*

Join Frank Jones as he leads senior adults from churches all over Alabama in four locations to sing hymns to the Lord. You may have been singing the hymns since you were a child, but each time you sing them, your praise to God is new again!

ONLINE INFO AND REGISTRATION:
alsbom.org/senioradultsingin

For more information, please contact
State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at
1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, or
(334) 613-2221, emitchell@alsbom.org.



Myers-Mallory

State Missions Offering

STATE GOAL: \$750,000

**Remember, gifts to the Myers-Mallory
State Missions Offering are received
throughout the year.**

Myers-Mallory.org



**ALABAMA WMU | DISASTER RELIEF
CHURCH PLANTING | CHURCH REVITALIZATION
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS**

SENT HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

Visit alsbom.org/convention for updated information about the program, messenger registration, lodging and related meetings.

2016 Alabama Baptist State Convention
Annual Meeting

November 15-16 at Eastmont Baptist Church,
4505 Atlanta Highway, Montgomery, AL 36109

TUESDAY EVENING

SPEAKER

Robert Smith

professor of Christian preaching,
Beeson Divinity School



MUSIC

Three on a String

CONVENTION SERMON



Greg Corbin

pastor, Lakeside
Baptist Church,
Birmingham
Wednesday morning

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Travis Coleman, Jr.

president, Alabama Baptist State Convention,
pastor, First Baptist Church, Prattville
Tuesday morning



THEME INTERPRETATIONS

Kevin Blackwell (with testimonies by Daniel Atkins, Jennifer Foster,
Terrence Jones and Blake Newsome) and Ryan Whitley (with testimonies by
Orlando Buck, Charles Carter and Blake Kersey)

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.

CONCLAVE

A TRAINING CONFERENCE TO EQUIP AND REJUVENATE YOUR YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM

ymconclave.org

CHATTANOOGA CONVENTION CENTER | JANUARY 26-28, 2017

For more information, contact State Missionary Scooter Kellum, 1-800-264-1225, ext. 280, (334) 613-2280, skellum@alsbom.org.
Conclave is jointly sponsored by the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and five other state conventions.

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

Upcoming Inspiration and Enrichment Events



STUDENT MISSIONS WEEKEND

Friday and Saturday, January 20-21, 2017
WorldSong Missions Place

For students in grades 7-12 and their leaders. Early bird registration deadline: December 15, 2016 (\$40 per person). Standard pricing registration deadline: January 12, 2017 (\$50 per person). A two-day event that exposes teens to the global mission of Christ through Bible study; worship; local, hands-on missions projects; personal testimony from a young missionary; and learning about missions opportunities in the U.S. and abroad.

Online info: AlabamaWMU.org/SMW

For more information, please contact Malory Ford at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 224, or (334) 613-2224, mford@alsbom.org.

CHILDREN'S MISSIONS EXPLOSION

Saturday February 4, 2017 (Register by January 20.) **First Baptist Church, Cullman, and First Baptist Church, Enterprise**

Saturday, February 11, 2017 (Register by January 27.) **Highland Baptist Church, Florence, and First Baptist Church, Monroeville**

For children grades 1-6 and their leaders. \$10 per person, t-shirts additional \$10 each. A fun, interactive way for children to learn about missions through meeting missionaries; seeing, tasting and experiencing new cultures; and learning how they can be missionaries right here at home. Register early. This event fills up fast!

Online info: AlabamaWMU.org/CME

For more information, please contact Crystal Akers at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 223, or (334) 613-2223, cakers@alsbom.org.

COMPLETE

Friday and Saturday, March 10-11, 2017
First Baptist Church, Prattville

For teen girls in grades 7-12 and their leaders. Register by February 28. \$35 per person (includes lunch Saturday and t-shirt). Complete is an unforgettable weekend where teen girls learn about God's plan for their lives through worship, Bible study and breakout sessions dealing with specific topics related to their walk with the Lord. This year, girls will learn how to answer tough questions on difficult issues and how to engage the world around them with compassion and truth.

Online info: AlabamaWMU.org/complete

For more information, please contact Malory Ford at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 224, or (334) 613-2224, mford@alsbom.org.

RENEW, A DAY AWAY WITH FRIENDS

Saturday, February 25, 2017
Taylor Road Baptist Church, Montgomery

For women of all ages. Register by February 16, 2017. \$35 per person. With dynamic worship through music, incredible Bible teaching and amazing missionaries, Renew is a potentially life-changing event for those who attend. Gather a group of friends, or come by yourself and make new friends. You will be glad you came!

Online info: AlabamaWMU.org/renew

For more information, please contact Dawn Watkins at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 226, or (334) 613-2226, dwatkins@alsbom.org.



FOCUS on One Mission

alabama association of baptist secretaries conference

**Sunday – Wednesday,
March 5-8, 2017,
Shocco Springs**

Theme: Blessed to be a Blessing

AABS 55th Annual Conference

Scripture: *And I will bless you and
make your name great, so that you will
be a blessing.*

~ **Genesis 12:2b (ESV)**

General Conference Leader:
April Pearson

Worship Leaders: Todd Holcomb
& Anthony Lindsey

Website:

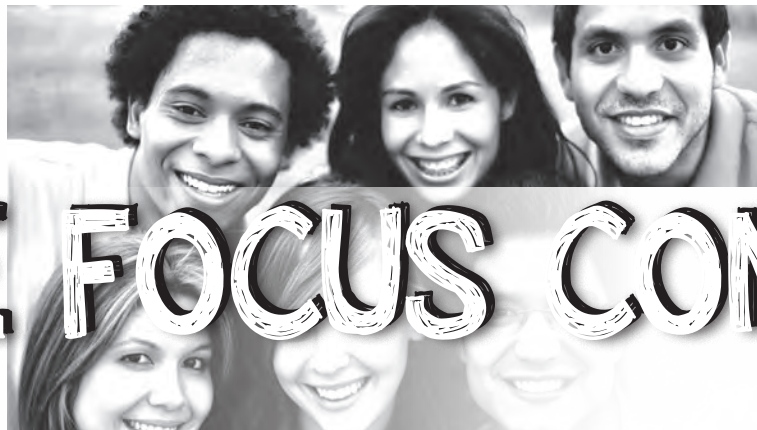
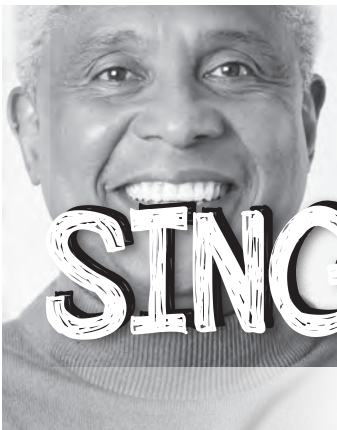
alabamabaptistsecretaries.com

Facebook page: Alabama
Association of Baptist Secretaries

Make plans now to join us for a time
of spiritual, professional and personal
growth through worship, study,
fellowship and educational breakout
sessions.

For more information, please contact
AABS President Sonya Burtis at (256)
796-5346.

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



SINGLE FOCUS CONFERENCE

**Thursday through Saturday,
February 2-4, 2017**

Gardendale First Baptist Church

Cost: \$99 per person

The Alabama Baptist State Board of
Missions is partnering with Gardendale
First Baptist Church, Table for One
Ministries and New Orleans Baptist

Theological Seminary to bring Single
Focus Conference to Alabama. This three-
day conference is targeted to pastors,
ministry leaders and students who are
interested in single adult ministry in
their local churches.

Phillip Nation, director of content
development at LifeWay Christian
Resources, will be the main speaker, and

there will be several breakout sessions
to discuss equipping leaders to reach
single adults.

For more information about this event
and singles ministries among Alabama
Baptists, please contact State Missionary
Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225,
ext. 221, or (334) 613-2221,
emitchell@alsbom.org.

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



**FREE
EVENT!**

Senior Adult Revival Thursday, March 16, 2017

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, FAIRHOPE
9:30 a.m.-Noon

Join us at First Baptist Church, Fairhope in lifting praise to God through
song and praying for revival.

Senior adults will hear messages delivered by **Jerry Henry**, retired pastor
of First Baptist Church, Fairhope, and **Chris Bell**, lead pastor of 3Circle
Church, Eastern Shore. **Ronnie McC Carson**, pastor to adults 55+ at

Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, will lead the worship music. You will also be blessed by special music led by UnAshamed, the Gospel
quartet from Cottage Hill.

Be sure to look at the various ministry displays in the fellowship hall prior to the session. Then come and enjoy the pre-session music, which
begins at 9:15 a.m. ~ **NO MEAL IS PROVIDED.**

For more information, please contact State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, or (334) 613-2221, emitchell@alsbom.org.



FLASHPOINT

DISCIPLE-MAKING CONFERENCE

LIMITED SEATING REGISTER NOW

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY, BIRMINGHAM

FLASHPOINT Disciple-Making Conference is coming to Wright Center at Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Dr., Birmingham, on Friday and Saturday, **01 • 13-14 • 2017**

FLASHPOINT is a meeting for people who are interested in making disciples Jesus-style! Best practices, tools and resources will be offered by some veteran disciple-makers including Robby Gallaty, senior pastor, Longhollow Baptist Church, Hendersonville, Tenn.; Craig Etheredge, lead pastor, First Baptist Church, Colleyville, Texas; Ken Adams, pastor, Crossroads Church, Newnan, Ga.; and David Fedele, children's pastor, First Baptist Church, Colleyville, Texas. These are just some of the leaders who will be leading sessions at FlashPoint in Birmingham.

WHAT BETTER WAY
TO SHOW OTHERS
WE LOVE GOD AND
LOVE PEOPLE THAN
TO MAKE DISCIPLES.
... THIS FLASHPOINT
CONFERENCE WILL
TEACH US HOW TO DO
JUST THAT.

ROBERT MULLINS, PASTOR,
MT. HEBRON BAPTIST
CHURCH, ELMORE

Explore both the strategy of leading our churches and ministries to become disciple-making and gaining the skills needed to be disciple-makers ourselves.

ONLINE INFO: birmingham.flashpointconference.com.
Learn about registration costs for individuals and groups, how to register, recommended hotels, more about the speakers and much more.

discipleFIRST  **SAMFORD**
UNIVERSITY

This event is made possible in part by gifts of Alabama Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

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

ALABAMA BIBLE DRILL 2017

MAY THE WORD BE WITH YOU

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY, JANUARY 27-28, 2017
SHOCCO SPRINGS

Worship Leader: Jeff Slaughter

Join us at the 2017 Bible Drill Retreat as we explore the importance of having the Word of God with us. Jeff Slaughter with Brentwood-Benson Music, who wrote scores of songs for LifeWay Christian Stores Vacation Bible School curriculum, will be leading worship. Conferences will be designed for children, youth and high school drill participants and leaders. Participants will be learning God's Word and the importance of it in their lives. Leaders will have the opportunity to learn more about Bible Drill and how it can be an effective ministry in their churches. Bible Drill in a Box, a make-and-take conference that provides more than 35 activities to use in classrooms, will be offered for each church.

Reservations/Costs: 1-800-280-1105
Registration/other info: alsbom.org/bibledrill

For more information, please contact State Missionary Belinda Stroud, bstroud@alsbom.org, or Ministry Assistant Julie Smith, jsmith@alsbom.org, at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 255, or (334) 613-2255.

Baptist

NEWS BRIEFS

COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES

Longtime Southern Baptist leader Smith dies

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — James H. Smith, former executive secretary of the Illinois Baptist State Association and later the fifth Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission president, died Oct. 21. He was 95.

Smith served 50 years in Southern Baptist leadership before retiring in 1991.

Born in Somerville, Smith professed faith in Christ at age 18.

After high school Smith audited classes at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and worked as a janitor until he could be accepted and afford a full-time student load.

He served in the Navy in the early 1940s in the South Pacific and later continued his education at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kansas.

Smith later served as pastor for 20 years in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri.

He later became Illinois Baptist executive secretary and during his first five years in that role he spoke more than 880 times.

Smith went to the Brotherhood Commission following the death of former president Glendon McCullough.

The Brotherhood Commission eventually merged with the Home Mission Board and the Radio and Television Commission to become the North American Mission Board in June 1997.

Smith's wife, Nona Lee Lockwood, preceded him in death, as did one son, David. His surviving children include John, Joy and Mark. (TAB, BP)



SMITH

Swedish commission visits BWA to learn

WASHINGTON — A team from the Commission for Government Support for Faith Communities in Sweden (SST) met Oct. 7 with the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) as part of an effort to determine how faith communities interact with other parts of society.

The eight-member team traveled to the United States on a fact-finding tour and also visited with the U.S. Department of State. While in the U.S., they sought to learn about the expectations that society and the state have of faith communities and the work done by faith communities to combat anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and xenophobia.

BWA staff, led by General Secretary Neville Callam, offered a summary of BWA's work through its seven freedom and justice commissions as well as its involvement in the United Nations, human rights visits, representations and advocacy and recognition through its human rights awards.

The work SST does is particularly crucial at this time as Sweden has taken in the second highest number of Syrian and other refugees among countries in Europe.

As recently as September the government of Sweden allocated the rough equivalent of some \$4 million "to civil society and religious communities to strengthen their activities that focus on asylum seekers and for the introduction of new arrivals." (BWA)

Pro-life court verdicts in US contradict, 'diminish credibility' of help centers

The freedom of pro-life pregnancy centers to determine their message to abortion-minded women has received contrasting verdicts from the federal court system recently.

On Oct. 14 the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco refused to grant an injunction to block a California law that requires pro-life pregnancy centers to notify their clients of the availability of abortion services elsewhere.

Ten days earlier, however, a federal judge in Maryland ruled a Baltimore law violates the free-speech rights of the Center for Pregnancy Concerns, thereby protecting the right of the charity to control what it communicates to the women it serves.

Limiting impact

The rulings affect laws that limit the impact of pro-life centers that provide free services to pregnant women. With the aid of ultrasound machines that demonstrate the humanity of the unborn child, such pregnancy centers are helping women decide to give birth. The centers also provide such services as medical consultations, baby clothing and diapers, job training, mentoring programs, and prenatal and parenting classes.

In Alabama there are no laws that limit pro-life pregnancy centers, according to Eric Johnston, president of Alabama Pro-Life Coalition, "because there's never been an issue with them."

Johnston noted that Alabama's centers are "very well run and operated and have many years of experience. They know what they're doing and they do a good job."

That being so, Johnston doesn't foresee laws limiting pregnancy centers coming to the state in the future.

Alabama law does include the following restrictions on abortions, according to a report by Guttmacher Institute.

► A woman must receive state-directed counseling (including information designed to discourage an abortion).

► The parent of a minor must

consent before an abortion is provided.

► A woman must undergo an ultrasound prior to an abortion and must be given the option to view the image.

In the Ninth Circuit Court ruling, "the most liberal circuit court in the country," according to Johnston, a three-judge panel refused to block enforcement of a 2015 California law that requires licensed pregnancy centers to post a notice for clients that says, "California has public programs that provide immediate free or low-cost access to comprehensive family planning services (including all FDA-approved methods of contraception), prenatal care and abortion for eligible women."

Matt Bowman, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), which represents the pregnancy centers, said, "Forcing these centers to promote abortion and recite the government's preferred views is a clear violation of their constitutionally protected First Amendment freedoms."

Johnston agreed, noting that these types of laws are "diminish-

ing the credibility of the pregnancy centers by making them put up huge signs on the main walls of the center that imply, 'We're not going to give you full service' and 'We're not a medical clinic.' It's just ridiculous," he said.

Government mandates

The Baltimore ordinance, adopted in 2009, mandates pregnancy centers display signs saying they do not provide abortions or contraceptives.

Federal judge Marvin Garbis ruled the law violates the freedom of speech of the Center for Pregnancy Concerns (CPC) specifically, but he did

not invalidate the measure.

The city's mandate "forces pregnancy centers to begin their conversations with a stark government disclaimer, divorced from the support offered by the center and suggesting that abortion is available elsewhere and might be considered a good option by pregnant women — a mes-

sage that the center expressly finds morally offensive and would not otherwise provide," Garbis wrote in his opinion, according to *The Baltimore Sun*. (BP, TAB)

"Forcing these centers to promote abortion ... is a clear violation of ... First Amendment freedoms."

Matt Bowman, senior counsel, Alliance Defending Freedom

Rock of Ages BC honored for 25 years



Photo by Jennifer Davis Rash

Lonette Berg (right), executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presents Joe F. Johnson (left), pastor of Rock of Ages Baptist Church, Tuskegee, with a plaque celebrating the church's 25th anniversary.

— Correction —

In the "Bethlehem Association celebrates 200th anniversary" article in the Oct. 27 issue, it reads that Monroe County has the largest number of Baptists among all counties in the state, but it should have stated the county has the largest percentage of Baptists.

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CHRISTIAN STORES

After School Satan Club in Washington state may be in grade schools soon

The Christian-based after school Good News Club has functioned in public schools in numerous cities for more than 10 years. Children at the clubs learn about the Bible, missions and music and are taught by trained volunteers who want to share the gospel with boys and girls.

But soon, if approved by an elementary school in Tacoma, Washington, children will have another after school option — the After School Satan Club (ASSC).

According to the founder of the Satanic Temple of Seattle, Lilith Starr, ASSC should be allowed in any school and “cannot be denied wherever Christian or any other religious clubs operate.”

Access was approved by Mount Vernon School District north of Seattle, but space would not be available until April 2017 so Starr has worked to obtain space at Point Defiance Elementary School in Tacoma. If approved, space would be available to ASSC by the end of November.

‘Target young children’

“We think [satanic clubs are] especially important when religious clubs target young children ages 5 to 12,” Starr said. “Because at these ages it can be hard for children to distinguish between official educators and the teachers proselytizing to them in the after-school clubs.”

The group also states on its website that they do not worship Satan or try to get students to convert to Satanism. One ethicist likened their group more to “atheist” activists than to Satan-worshippers.

But Christian parents in Tacoma are voicing their opposition, according to The Christian Post.

“My son will not be at a school where they’re preaching against what I believe,” said Bishop Michael Doss of Deliverance House of Prayer. “And if I have to take my baby out of Tacoma schools, I’m going to home-school because they want to allow this stuff, I’ll do that.”

Tacoma, however, is not alone in this after school club battle.

In Portland, Oregon, ASSC was approved to begin its program, focusing “on science and rational thinking” and promoting “benevolence and empathy for everybody,” at Sacramento Elementary School.

The Satanic Temple also is seeking to place programs in Atlanta, along with several other school districts located near local Satanic Temple chapters. The group has specifically targeted schools that currently host or have previously hosted Good News Clubs.

According to the *LA Times*, the Los Angeles Unified School District recently rejected the ASSC request for a meeting space in the Panorama City area.

The U.S. Supreme Court, how-

ever, ruled in 2001 that if a public school provides space for after school clubs like the Good News Club, they are not allowed to discriminate against other groups based on their “viewpoint of speech,” The Post reported.

Taking ‘the bait’

Family Research Council’s Travis Weber, director of the center for religious liberty, advised Christian parents to not argue with the operation of ASSC and not “take the bait” — not in support of the group’s teachings, but rather, in support of religious liberty for all.

ASSC is seeking to “bait” Christian parents into causing enough uproar to entirely shut down the limited public forum.

“First school administrators should not be deterred,” Weber wrote on frcblog.com. “The ASSC organization would love nothing more than for the school forum be shut down to all groups.”

“Second we should not look at this as a setback, but as an opportunity,” Weber wrote. “If the ASSC ... wants to start a spiritual discussion ... let’s welcome [it]. The group’s use of the term ‘Satan’ gives everyone the opportunity to discuss Satan. Let’s explain his role in the Bible, his power to tempt humans away from God to our own detriment and the good news that Jesus provides a way out of that temptation.” (TAB)



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TOGETHER

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Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

The Person of Christ

Powerful

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

When we study the life of Christ as revealed in the Gospels, we are impressed with His life of power and authority. These are two terms we popularly use almost interchangeably.

However, while the terms are closely related, we might think of power as the ability to perform what is extraordinary or beyond what normally happens. We might think of authority as the right to exercise that power or ability.

'All authority'

Jesus appeared on the scene demonstrating power to perform unusual feats, while claiming rightful authority for doing so. Even so, we are often hard-pressed to separate these concepts in Christ's life. Toward the end of His earthly ministry and after His atoning death and authenticating resurrection, He made the audacious claim that "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18).

He was and is a powerful person with divine authority to exercise that power. How then do we account for His genuine humanity and His more than human power? In short, we might ponder what made Christ a powerful person.

We might at first glance hold that it could not be otherwise with One who was the Son of God. Then at second glance we recall that when He came in the form of human flesh, He in some sense emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives as the Son of God. Whatever the nature and extent of that emptying, the record tells us that the power and authority of His life in word and deed was because of the presence of the Holy Spirit infusing His humanity.

Anointed

Thus we read that at the time of His baptism, the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove. We read in Luke 4:1 that following His baptism, "Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." John, who baptized Jesus, bore

this witness about Him: "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure" (John 3:34).

In short, Christ's life was one of unmeasured or limitless fullness of the Holy Spirit. So endowed, the incarnate Christ embarked on a powerful ministry of teaching people, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, healing infirmities and casting out demons.

Later the apostle Peter, who was an eyewitness of Christ's public ministry, bore this witness about Him, "After the baptism which John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:37-38). From where did this power come? The short explanation is that He was anointed with the Holy Spirit.

Available to His followers

What are we to glean for ourselves from Christ's example of a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit? What we learn is that we also must be persons endured with the power of the Spirit (Luke 24:49). The idea of endowment is one of "being clothed upon." Not only clothed upon by the Spirit, we are to be persons filled with the Spirit.

God made this a direct command in Ephesians 5:18: "Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit." As with Christ, so with us, the Holy Spirit is the source of our power and authority for Christian living and serving. 🌿

Jerry Batson is a retired Alabama Baptist pastor who also has served as associate dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and professor of several schools of religion during his career.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

In the upcoming presidential election I feel we do not have a qualified candidate. Both have made terrible decisions in the past. Therefore, as a Christian, I will not vote for [a candidate but] for the party that will best reflect my values.

In the next four years there will be appointments for Supreme Court justices and federal judges. We should consider how the party stands on abortion, same-sex "marriages," religious freedom and numerous other issues.

As believers we must prayerfully decide how we will vote. We owe it to our children and grandchildren.

Too much is at stake to stay home on Election Day.

Maragem Bealle
Mobile, Ala.

SADDENED BY ARTICLE

I was very saddened to read the article "Faith leaders speak out" in the Oct. 20 issue. I don't think our church paper should have mentioned the name of any politician that is about to be voted on. *The Alabama Baptist* goes into the homes of Baptists all over the state and may have caused the voters to stay home and not vote. What about tax exempt status if we get political? No names should have been mentioned.

Evelyn Hamrick
Wedowee, Ala.

EDITOR'S NOTE — *You may be correct. It certainly would have been safer for us not to deal with the story. However, we thought TAB would be failing in its assigned responsibility to keep readers apprised of what is being said and done in Baptist life on important issues. We decided to do a wrap-up story that led with people continuing to support Trump. That was followed by comments from one of the most prominent Baptist women among Southern Baptists. Then we printed the statements of*

two prominent Southern Baptist Convention entity leaders who oppose Trump. The story ended with reference to World Magazine — a leading conservative evangelical publication — and Jerry Falwell Jr. at Liberty University. Our attempt was to provide readers an overview of the things being said by evangelical leaders. TAB offered no opinion or endorsements. We reported only what others were saying.

CONCERNED BY BETH MOORE

I am concerned about the comments made by Beth Moore in the "Faith leaders speak out" article in the Oct. 20 issue. She is not much of a Christian if she holds something against Donald Trump that happened 11 years ago. How does she know he hasn't been forgiven for all his mistakes and is now trying to do what is right? The Bible says, "Judge not, lest you be judged of the same judgment." It also says, "Ye that is without sin, cast the first stone."

I don't believe she would qualify to cast the first stone. There has only been one perfect person on this earth, and that is Jesus.

Betty Messick
Montgomery, Ala.

TITHING

The Sept. 22 article "What's it worth? New study finds religion in US makes \$1.2 trillion impact on economy" was very interesting.

My idea is that there is a great difference between religion and Christianity. Religion is a man-designed form of worship while Christianity is a way of life.

Think what an impact would be made on our economy if all Christians tithed.

Edward McCrory
Muscle Shoals, Ala. 🌿

GA minister forced to turn over sermons; outrage on his behalf prompts petition

An online petition on behalf of a Georgia lay minister who was ordered to hand over his sermons has garnered widespread support. Organized by the Family Research Council, the petition had more than 20,000 signatures at press time.

Seventh-day Adventist lay minister Eric Walsh is a leading health expert who was previously appointed to President Barack Obama's Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, The Christian Post reported.

Walsh's employment was rescinded by Georgia's Department of Public Health after it investigated his Christian views on marriage, according to The Post. He filed discrimination charges in 2014 and received

the order for his sermons shortly after.

The petition to Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal reads: "I stand with Dr. Eric Walsh's freedom to believe and live according to his deeply held beliefs. The demand that he hand over his sermons, sermon notes and all pastoral documents including his Bible represents a government intrusion into the sanctity of the church, pastor's study and pulpit."

"Heavy-handed tactics like this have the effect of intimidating and silencing people of faith everywhere."

Such targeting of the pulpit by the government is unconscionable, and I urge you to use all means of your authority to correct this egregious overreach of the state into church affairs." (TAB)

**"Such targeting
of the pulpit by
the government is
unconscionable."**

**Online petition to Georgia
Gov. Nathan Deal**

CAMPUS

News



JUDSON COLLEGE

► **Judson College Hosts Summer Missions Expo:** Judson College in Marion hosted its first Summer Missions Opportunity Expo on Oct. 17–18. Judson students had opportunities to meet representatives from various missions and ministry organizations and learn about ways they could be involved in summer missions.

Organizations represented included the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions office of collegiate and student ministries; Nehemiah Teams/Project 52; WorldSong; Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega; Christ-Centered Church, Miami, Florida; Sowing Seeds of Hope; Judson College's office of faith-based service and learning; and Urban Nations Outreach.

In addition to sharing information about their organizations at the Expo, representatives shared testimonies and information at Revive, a weekly Bible study hosted by Judson Campus Ministries.

► **Judson College Exhibit Highlights Unreached People Groups:** The Judson College Introduction to Missiology class and Judson College Campus Ministries in Marion co-hosted a traveling

exhibit Oct. 10–13, called "The Wall of the Unreached."

The exhibit consisted of panels listing the names of approximately 7,000 people groups who are identified as "unreached" by the gospel of Jesus Christ and was provided by Unleashed 4 the Unreached.

SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

► **Reformation Celebration Features Composer K. Lee Scott:** Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham presented "A Reformation Celebration of Hymns and Art" featuring one of America's premier composers, K. Lee Scott, on Nov. 1 in Andrew Gerow Hodges Chapel.

This service featured hymns written by Scott, including "To God We Come in Prayer and Praise," which was commissioned in honor of the late Hodges. Scott was accompanied by the choir of Mountain Brook Baptist Church, Birmingham; a brass quintet; timpani; and organ.

► **Beeson Divinity School Hosts Reformation Heritage Lectures:** Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi, of Jos, Nigeria, gave three lectures for Beeson Divinity School's annual Reformation

Heritage Lectures in Birmingham on Nov. 1–3.

Kwashi lectured on the impact of the Reformation on Africa, African preaching and persecution.

► **Samford University Welcomes New Sorority:** This fall Samford University in Birmingham welcomed 57 new members of Delta Delta Delta sorority, the latest addition to the campus' thriving Greek life community. It is the first new sorority at Samford in about 20 years.

UNIVERSITY OF MOBILE

► **John Maxwell to Speak at Annual Scholarship Banquet:** The University of Mobile will bring world-renowned leadership expert, speaker and author John Maxwell to Mobile for the 12th annual University of Mobile Scholarship Banquet on April 27, 2017. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center in Mobile.

Maxwell is a No. 1 *New York Times* bestselling author, coach and speaker who has sold more than 26 million books in 50 languages. In 2014 he was identified as the No. 1 leader in business by the American Management Association.

For more information, call 251-442-2917 or email advancement@umobile.edu.

► **University of Mobile 'Christmas Spectacular' Tickets on Sale:** The University of Mobile's "Christmas Spectacular" musical extravaganza is back for its 14th season, and tickets are on sale now for the largest family-friendly Christmas concert along the Gulf Coast.

Christmas Spectacular will be held Nov. 17, 18 and 19 at 6:45 p.m. and Nov. 20 at 3:45 p.m. It will be held at a new location this year, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit <http://bit.ly/2eAkiiA>.

► **University of Mobile Golf Classic Set for Nov. 18:** The 19th annual University of Mobile Golf Classic tournament, a four-person scramble that benefits the University of Mobile Annual Fund, will be held Nov. 18 at Magnolia Grove Golf Course in Mobile. Registration begins at 7 a.m. with shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. Lunch and team awards and prizes will begin at 1 p.m. For more information about participation costs or to register online, visit umobile.edu/mobileclassic. #

TAB CLASSIFIEDS

For information about placing a classified ad, contact the advertising department of The Alabama Baptist at 205-870-4720, ext. 102, or ads@thealabamabaptist.org. Copy deadline is two weeks before publication.

CHURCH POSITIONS

MUSIC MINISTER

Ezra Baptist Church in Western Jefferson County is seeking a bivocational music minister. Send resumé to: Ezra Baptist, Attn: Music Committee, 1512 Toadvine Road, Bessemer, AL 35023.

BIVOCATIONAL WORSHIP LEADER

Silver Run Baptist Church, Seale Alabama. Submit resúmes to Cheryl Boutwell at justshert@gmail.com.

TWO POSITIONS

Calvary Heights Baptist Church, Alexander City, AL, is receiving applicants for a part-time, bivocational minister of youth and bivocational music director. Resúmes and inquiries may be sent to: CalvaryHeightsBaptist@gmail.com.

STUDENT MINISTER

Union Hill Baptist, Oneonta, is seeking a full-time student minister (grades 1–12) for a growing

fellowship with two Sunday morning services. Experience should include leadership in evangelism, missions, small group ministry and discipleship for children and youth. Please submit resúmes to: 2919 Co. Hwy. 39, Oneonta, AL 35121. 205-274-9232. bbarnett@otelco.net.

MINISTER OF STUDENTS

Mount Vernon Baptist Church is currently seeking a full-time minister of students. Please send resúmes to: Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Attn: David Martin 2650 Pine Street, Albertville, AL 35950.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DIRECTOR

Oak Bowery Baptist Church in Calhoun County, AL, is seeking a children's ministry director. Resúmes may be mailed to: Oak Bowery Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Committee, 3300 AL Highway 144, Ohatchee, AL 36271 or oakbowerybaptist@att.net.

CHILD CARE POSITIONS

North Shelby Baptist Church is looking for two paid child care positions for Sunday nights, Wednesday nights and special events. Please contact Julie Donovan at Julie@northshelbybaptist.org for more information.

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- 5** Hold your device over a page or image in *The Alabama Baptist* (TAB) marked as augmented reality and watch the paper come to life.
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- 7** Each week when TAB arrives, open the app and hold your device over the augmented reality articles.

Leading the way

Southern Baptist churches among fastest-growing in US

Southern Baptist churches are among the top 100 fastest-growing and largest participating churches in the country, according to recent research released by LifeWay Christian Resources and *Outreach Magazine*.

Largest participating churches refers to those that participated in the survey with an attendance of more than 5,269. Twenty Southern Baptist churches made the largest churches list including: NewSpring Church, Anderson, South Carolina (3); Sadleback Church, Riverside, California (5); Elevation Church, Matthews, North Carolina (11); Second Baptist Church, Houston (13); Woodlands Church, The Woodlands, Texas (14); Lake Pointe Church, Rockwall, Texas (28); Potential Church, Cooper City, Florida (35); The Village Church, Flower Mound, Texas (36); Pinelake Church, Brandon, Mississippi (37); The Summit Church, Durham, North Carolina (42); Cross Church, Springdale, Arkansas (45); Church by the Glades, Coral Springs, Florida (46); Houston's First Baptist Church, Houston, Texas (51); Biltmore Church, Arden, North Carolina (63); Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tennessee (65); Shadow Mountain Community

Church, El Cajon, California (67); Austin Stone Community Church, Austin, Texas (72); Long Hollow Baptist Church, Hendersonville, Tennessee (76); Sandals Church, Riverside, California (83); and The Church Without Walls, Houston, Texas (90).

Largest participating

That means five Southern Baptist churches (or one quarter) make up the top 20 list of largest churches in the United States.

Southern Baptist churches make up one-quarter of the top 20 list of largest churches in the United States.

The other denominations represented in the top 20 are Baptist, Baptist Converge Worldwide, Independent Christian Churches, nondenominational and Wesleyan.

Nondenominational churches represent the largest number on the full 100 list (almost half) with 44 churches. Southern Baptists follow that with 20 churches, then Christian Independent Churches with 15.

In the Southeast

By region, the Southeast leads the way with 37 of the largest churches and a total attendance of 462,183.

NewSpring Church, Anderson, South Carolina, tops both categories' lists among Southern Baptists while ranking eighth among the fastest-growing churches in the country as a whole.

Central Baptist Church, Jones-

boro, Arkansas, follows behind NewSpring Church, ranking 11th on the fastest-growing list and reporting a 30 percent growth of 958 in its attendance, according to Baptist Press. Following behind Central Baptist is Beltway Park Church, Abilene, Texas, ranking No. 15 on the same list.

Denominationally, 42 nondenominational churches made the fastest-growing list, along with 20 Southern Baptist churches, 12 Independent Christian Churches and nine Assemblies of God churches.

Fastest-growing

The Southern Baptist churches on the fastest-growing list besides the three mentioned earlier are: Elevations Church, Matthews, North Carolina (18); Hill Church, Greensboro, North Carolina (25); Calvary Fellowship, Miramar, Florida (31); Liberty Baptist Church, Hampton, Virginia (35); Bethlehem Church, Bethlehem, Georgia (38); TrueNorth Church, North Augusta, South Carolina (42); Sandals Church, Riverside, California (45); The Summit Church, Durham, North Carolina (46); Lake Pointe Church, Rockwall, Texas (53); Lifepoint Church, Lewis Center, Ohio (58); Pinelake Church, Brandon, Mississippi (60); Mercy Anderson Mill Road Baptist Church, Moore, South Carolina (61); Sugar Creek Baptist Church, Sugar Land, Texas (68); Biltmore Church, Arden, North Carolina (77); The Summit Church, North Little Rock, Arkansas (94); theChurch.at, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma (96); and Rock Bridge Community Church, Dalton, Georgia (99).

Only one Southern Baptist church made the top 20 of fastest-growing churches. Other denominations represented in the top 20 include Assemblies of God, Independent Christian Churches, Church of God Cleveland and nondenominational.

On the complete top 100 list of fastest-growing churches, nondenominational churches were the highest represented with 43 churches.

Overall, Southern Baptist churches achieved higher rankings in the category of participation than in the area of growth, according to the compiled lists, Baptist Press reported. (TAB)



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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For November 6

Explore the Bible

By Jay T. Robertson, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile

BEING USEFUL
2 Peter 1:3-11

Stand on God's Complete
Provision (3-4)

This brief epistle includes several central themes of the Christian faith. It emphasizes the centrality of faith in the Christian life, the saving righteousness of God, the primacy of Jesus Christ and the importance of knowing God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The call to godliness is rooted in and secured by God's grace. His gracious power supplies what He requires. God Himself has acted in His infinite power to accomplish salvation, something only He could accomplish. Christ Himself has provided everything believers need for "life and godliness." Only God can make people godly.

Eternal life is not merely the experience of bliss but also involves transformation so that Jesus' followers are morally perfected and made like God. Believers, therefore, should live in a godly way even now, though perfection in godliness will not be ours until the day Christ returns.

We must not conclude that godliness comes from our own inherent abilities since the gifts given to believers are rooted in the knowledge of Christ. Everything needed for eternal life is mediated through the knowledge of Him, who calls believers to Himself. The word for "knowledge" refers to the encounter with Jesus Christ that began at conversion and continues throughout one's life.

Christ called us "to His own glory and excellence." We are called to live in harmony with God's own moral character. "Glory" refers to Christ's splendor and majesty as a divine being. "Excellence" was used by Greek writers to describe the sum of all desirable character qualities.

It is through these "precious and very great promises" believers become partakers of the divine nature. These promises include

the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, being conformed to the likeness of Christ, Christ's return, eternal life in heaven and all the promises in Scripture that relate to the gift of new life.

Cultivate Your Character (5-9)

Peter lists qualities that characterize a life partaking of the divine nature. This list is not a legalistic code but rather the desires and virtues of a transformed heart. The command to live a new life is grounded in the divine power and promises that were granted to believers when they came to know Jesus.

"Make every effort to supplement your faith" means Jesus' followers should not merely confess faith in Christ but actually live as He taught. He is not saying works are a prerequisite for salvation but rather is arguing that saving faith produces change in the believer's life. No one ever meets Jesus and stays the same.

The chain of virtues begins with faith. Trusting God is the root from which all other virtues spring. People who rely on God and His promises begin to live a new way. Believers are to add to their faith "virtue," that is, moral excellence. They also are to add "knowledge," probably referring to the knowledge of God's will and ways that are necessary for every Christian. As we grow in Christ we grow in self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and love.

A lifelong pattern of growth in Christlike character is expected of Christians and is essential for fruitful ministry. Otherwise, we do not live as forgiven sinners. We behave like unsaved people.

Live with Assurance (10-11)

Believers should never take salvation for granted. Growing in the Christlike virtues in verses 5-7 will give believers increasing confidence that God has called them to salvation. Good works are evidence of and give assurance of salvation, though they are never the basis of it.✠

Bible Studies for Life

By Jeffery M. Leonard, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Religion, Samford University

UNSTOPPABLE OPPORTUNITIES
Acts 3:1-10

One of Jesus' most famous parables is the story of the Good Samaritan. As Luke recounts Jesus' telling of the parable, he recalls a time when Jesus was asked what a person must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answers by joining together two passages from the Torah: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength," (Deut. 6:5), and "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). It is at this point that Jesus' clever inquisitor asks a follow-up question: "Yes, but who is my neighbor?" The story of the Good Samaritan is Jesus' answer to this important (if impertinent) question.

Although the parable of the Good Samaritan may be quite familiar to us, an important turn of phrase in the story merits particular attention. The question that prompted Jesus to tell the parable was, "Who is my neighbor?" Yet, as Jesus finishes the parable, He twists the question, asking, "Which of these three was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?"

Jesus does not directly answer the question of who our neighbor is. Instead, He forces His hearers to consider to whom they ought to be neighbors. In Jesus' mind, loving one's neighbor is not just a passive acceptance of others but an active attempt to meet the needs of those who are hurting. It was this sort of outreach that Jesus modeled in His own life and which Jesus' disciples would imitate in the book of Acts.

See the opportunity your intersections with people provide. (1-4)

As Luke sets the scene in Acts 3, Peter and John are headed up to the temple one afternoon for the time of evening prayers.

On this trip to the temple, though, the disciples encounter a man who had been lame from birth and whose disability had reduced him to begging for alms as worshippers went in and out of the temple gates. He asked the same of Peter and John when they passed by.

Share the love of Christ through those encounters. (5-8)

It might have been tempting for the disciples to just keep walking. After all, they were on their way to an important place (the temple) at an important time (evening prayers) for an important purpose (worship).

But to keep on walking would have been too much like the callous religious personnel in the story of the Good Samaritan. Perhaps with the words of their Teacher still ringing in their ears, Peter and John knew they had to stop.

As Peter fixed his gaze on the man, the beggar naturally expected to get a few coins from him. Peter's gift was much greater than that, however. "I have no silver or gold," he said, "but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk."

One encounter often leads to more opportunities to share Christ. (9-10)

The immediate effect of Peter's gift was evident as the man stood up and began to walk and leap about, praising God as he did so. An even more powerful effect would flow out of this initial gift, however.

As the healed man praised God, the message of the God who had healed him spread far beyond the gates of the temple. Countless other people heard about what had happened and heard about the Savior in whose name the disciples had acted.

Their act of neighborliness, their willingness to reach out to one who was hurting, became the channel through which many others would be touched as well.✠

Christian Crossword

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Across

1. To ____ the brokenhearted. (Luke 4:18)

4. Honor, and glory, and _____. (Rev. 5:12)

11. The hearing _____. (Prov. 20:12)

12. ____ it with the prayers. (Rev. 8:3)

13. The ____ to come. (Eph. 2:7)

15. Princes of Midian, _____. (Josh. 13:21)

16. Preach the word in _____. (Acts 16:16)

18. Lines. (abbr.)

19. The son of _____. (1 Kings 4:9)

21. Doctor of Divinity. (abbr.)

22. A ____ come from God. (John 3:2)

25. Airport code for Monte Carlo, Monaco.

27. Uz and _____. (Gen. 36:28)

28. ____ the beauty of the Lord. (Ps. 27:4)

31. To rid of excess by cutting.

32. Zechariah, _____. (1 Chron. 15:18)

33. Though they be ____ like

34. Japanese city.

35. Established church. (abbr.)

36. The waters called he _____. (Gen. 1:10)

37. Biology: resembling a string of beads.

39. Mother.

40. She is thine _____. (Lev. 18:14)

43. Let us ____ before the Lord our maker. (Ps. 95:6)

46. To demand the restoration or return of.

48. Following the ____ great with young. (Ps. 78:71)

49. Turn ye unto _____. (Zech. 1:3)

50. Symbol for chlorine.

51. Scrap of cloth.

52. Known unto ____ the mystery. (Eph. 3:3)

53. ____; and he smelleth the battle. (Job 39:25)

54. ____ in peace. (Mark 5:34)

Down

1. I will restore ____ unto thee. (Jer. 30:17)

2. Fly as the ____.

3. Now these ____ thy servants. (Neh. 1:10)

5. A ____ of hospitality. (Titus 1:8)

6. One of a people of southern Nigeria.

7. Science fiction. (abbr.)

8. I the Lord ____ the heart. (Jer. 17:10)

9. Internal Revenue Service. (abbr.)

10. Let us be ____ and rejoice. (Rev. 19:7)

14. Offer up spiritual _____. (1 Pet. 2:5)

15. Garden of _____. (Gen. 2:15)

17. Idaho. (abbr.)

20. To everlasting. _____. (Ps. 41:13)

23. Holy garments for _____. (Ex. 28:2)

24. Sons of Pharez ... Hezron and _____. (Gen. 46:12)

26. Weep no _____. (Isa. 30:19)

28. All things are ____ new. (2 Cor. 5:17)

29. Will increase in _____. (Prov. 9:9)

30. Doctor of Dental Science. (abbr.)

31. Technical knockout. (abbr.)

32. My cry came ____ him. (Ps. 18:6)

36. Witnessing both to ____ and great. (Acts 26:22)

37. God my _____. (Job 35:10)

38. Contraction for "I am."

41. United Artists. (abbr.)

42. Symbol for thulium.

44. Northwest Airlines. (abbr.)

45. Electroencephalogram. (abbr.)

47. Circuit Court of Appeals. (abbr.)

49. Every knee shall bow to _____. (Rom. 14:11)

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TOP 10

best-selling Christian books

FICTION

- 1. The Book of Mysteries**
By Jonathan Cahn (Frontline)
- 2. The Wish**
By Beverly Lewis (Bethany)
- 3. The Hawaiian Quilt**
By Wanda E. Brunstetter (Barbour)
- 4. Priceless**
By Joel Smallbone (Worthy)
- 5. The Undoing of Saint Silvanus**
By Beth Moore (Tyndale)
- 6. The Shack**
By William P. Young (Windblown)
- 7. An Amish Harvest**
By Beth Wiseman (Thomas Nelson)
- 8. The Selfless Act**
By Wanda E. Brunstetter (Barbour)
- 9. Redeeming Love**
By Francine Rivers (WaterBrook & Multnomah)
- 10. Mountain Christmas Brides**
By Mildred Colvin, Mary Davis, Susan Page Davis, Lena Nelson Dooley, Darlene Franklin (Barbour)

NONFICTION

- 1. Uninvited**
By Lysa TerKeurst (Thomas Nelson)
- 2. The 5 Love Languages**
By Gary D. Chapman (Moody)
- 3. Jesus Calling (Hardback)**
By Sarah Young (Thomas Nelson)
- 4. Present Over Perfect**
By Shauna Niequist (Zondervan)
- 5. Fervent**
By Priscilla Shirer (B&H)
- 6. The Purpose Driven Life**
By Rick Warren (Zondervan)
- 7. Chase the Lion**
By Mark Batterson (WaterBrook & Multnomah)
- 8. The Total Money Makeover (Classic Ed.)**
By Dave Ramsey (Thomas Nelson)
- 9. Without Rival**
By Lisa Bevere (Revell)
- 10. No God But One**
By Nabeel Qureshi (Zondervan)

Source: Christian Book Expo at press time



Christian rock band RED is composed of vocalist Michael Barnes (center), guitarist Anthony Armstrong (left) and bass player Randy Armstrong (right), who are twin brothers.

Photo courtesy of Merge PR

‘Searching for something’

Christian rock band RED reaches at-risk youth

By Leann Callaway
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

As they share about their personal struggles during concerts, members of Christian rock band RED hope to connect students to Christ by breaking down barriers and providing a safe zone to establish authenticity and reliability.

“If you think of the color red, it’s the power color and it’s symbolic of strong emotions,” guitarist Anthony Armstrong said. “It’s the embodiment of who we are as a group, as well as our music. The different themes that we discuss in our songs lend [themselves] to those emotions that we all feel and go through. The name is short, bold and it means so much to us.”

While performing in venues across the country, the band focuses on sharing the gospel message with hard-to-reach youth.

“First John 3 talks about how your true identity can only be revealed when Christ is revealed in you,” Armstrong said. “We’ve noticed there are a lot of kids struggling to find who they are and what they are here for. By discovering their identity in Christ, we want to help them realize what impact they can have on the world rather than how the world currently has an impact on them.”

More than music

More than having a passion for music, the group has a calling to touch lives.

“All of the guys in the band have been through the ringer in a lot of different ways, and we’ve noticed that the world has crept its way into a lot of people’s lives and has defined them,” Armstrong said. “We’ve constantly seen people hurt by the fact that they

don’t know who they are, what they are here for and what their purpose is. They soak up and gravitate toward this worldly view of what they should look like and be like. We want them to realize their full potential and not listen to the lies being thrown at them by the enemy.”

Difficult but important

“It’s a scary place to be when you are roaming the halls of your high school and the streets of your town and being this empty, broken person. It is a difficult thing, but to find yourself in all of that craziness is what’s most important.”

With the widespread appeal of their songs, the group has sold more than a million albums, received two Grammy Award nominations and garnered multiple Dove Awards from the Gospel Music Association.

Over the past decade, the group has heard countless testimonies about lives being changed for God’s glory as a result of their authenticity and approachability.

“I think kids who listen to our music are the ones who gravitate toward the heavier side of rock and

roll,” Armstrong noted. “They are searching for something that is meaningful and inspiring, and I think our band helps them fill that void of what they are searching for and gives them the music they enjoy but without the negative lyrics. It’s mind boggling some of the stories we receive and how these kids talk about our music being life changing and life saving.

“We’ve had kids come up to us after shows with tears in their eyes as they tell us how our music has rescued them from a pit of despair and darkness. We realize the importance of making this music and how it’s making a difference to save these kids for eternity.”

“We want [audiences] to realize their full potential and not listen to the lies being thrown at them.”

**Anthony Armstrong
guitarist, RED**



BP photo by Jedediah Smith

Syrian refugees cross the border from Syria to Jordan. The staggering refugee crisis in the region has been compounded by the intense fighting in Iraq that has driven thousands of Iraqis from their homes.

‘Messy’ situation

CEO hopes Christians will one day return to Iraq, Syria

It’s no secret that Iraq and Syria have become tough places for Christians to live in recent years. But the departure of Christians from the two countries has reached massive proportions, according to Lisa Pearce, CEO of Open Doors U.K. and Ireland.

More than 80 percent of Iraq’s Christians have left since 2003, and nearly 50 percent of Christians have fled Syria since 2010.

Before the Iraq War, the nation was home to about 1.5 million Christians, but now — in the wake of sectarian violence and the rise of ISIS — fewer than 300,000 still reside there, according to The Christian Post.

“In Iraq since 2003, 5 out of 6 Christians have left because they have completely given up hope of a future there,” Pearce said in a recent interview with Britain’s Premier news outlet.

And in Syria, the Christians who remain fear total genocide, according to news reports earlier this year.

Unclear future

As international coalitions push ISIS back and reclaim territory, it’s unclear as to whether Christians will ever feel as though they can or want to return, Pearce told Premier. But it’s necessary for them to be able to return if they want and feel protected once they’re there.

“We can’t ask people to stay or to leave, but it is crucial that they have the opportunity to stay because this is the homeland of Christianity,” Pearce said. “Jesus visited Syria from Galilee and Paul was famously converted on the road to Damascus. In Iraq the Christian faith is so ancient that tradition holds that it was the disciple Thomas who first brought it there.”

No easy fix

But Pearce said the situation was “messy,” especially in Syria, and there aren’t any easy fixes.

“It is making sure that they are part of that discussion, part of that framework that we are considering when we are looking at different ways to intervene because there is great danger in all these debates about Sunni, Shia and Russia,” Pearce said. “There are huge parties involved, but those groups who aren’t a large population, they fall through the cracks. Not just in the country, but in our plans to support the region as well.”

She said her prayer is that Christians will one day be seen as an equal part of society again in Syria and Iraq and have “a role and opportunity to be part of reconciling and rebuilding those societies for everybody’s benefit and that Christians in that diaspora who fled will gradually gain confidence and return.” (TAB)

“In Iraq since 2003, 5 out of 6 Christians have left because they have completely given up hope of a future there.”

Lisa Pearce
CEO, Open Doors UK and Ireland

PERSECUTED CHURCH

Compiled from Wire Services



Kenyan church fearful after Islamic attack

MANDERA, Kenya — Church members in a northeastern town in Kenya fear for their lives after six people died in a gun and grenade attack by Islamic extremists Oct. 6.

Targeting predominantly Christian migrant workers from Kenya’s interior, rebels from Somalia’s Al Shabaab group reportedly took responsibility for the attack at a residential compound in Mandera, with a spokesman for the militants saying it was designed to drive Christians from the area. The attack in Mandera, tucked in Kenya’s northeast corner near the Somali border, reportedly wounded several others.

Among 27 people rescued were Christians who arrived at their church traumatized and in shock. “The loud grenade woke me up, and I heard one of the attackers saying the ‘infidels’ should leave the Muslim area of Mandera,” one survivor said. “There were loud cries for help as the attackers were shooting from all directions.”

Earlier in 2016 in a pre-dawn raid on a predominantly Christian area in coastal Kenya, Al Shabaab rebels killed at least four Christians, beheading one of them, and they have carried out other attacks in the Mandera area.

An attack on a bus and a truck near Mandera by Al Shabaab insurgents took the lives of two Christians in December 2015, and on July 7, 2015, Al Shabaab killed 17 quarry workers near Mandera, including several Christians. (MS)

Nigerian massacres kill nearly 50 Christians

GODOGODO, Nigeria — Muslim Fulani herdsmen killed more than 40 Christians in an attack on Godogodo in northern Nigeria on Oct. 15 and left another eight dead in an assault three weeks earlier, area leaders said.

Godogodo residents said the second massacre began at 5 p.m. Thomas Akut, pastor of the local Evangelical Church Winning All Good News Church, and his family escaped harm, sleeping on the ground outside town until the following morning when they made their way to Kafanchan.

“We fled into the bushes and some of us escaped to safer areas,” he said. “The attackers were in the hundreds and were well armed. Some of them wore army uniforms, while others wore police uniforms. Some of them exchanged gunfire with the few soldiers stationed at the post office in the town, while others burned down houses of Christians.”

Solomon Musa, an attorney and president of the Southern Kaduna People’s Union, said nearly all houses in Godogodo have been burned, and the Muslim Fulani herdsmen also destroyed property worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, grazing their cattle on farmers’ crops and destroying what remained.

“The savagery and barbarity of the attack is beyond belief,” Musa said. (MS)

Muslim mobs exhume Protestant’s body twice

JALAL-ABAD, Kyrgyzstan — Mobs in Kyrgyzstan’s western Jalal-Abad region dug up the body of deceased Protestant Kanygul Satybaldiyeva twice in mid-October, insisting non-Muslims cannot be buried in village cemeteries.

On Oct. 14 and 17, mobs in two villages exhumed the body of Satybaldiyeva, a 76-year-old member of Jesus Christ Protestant Church.

Police and National Security Committee secret police officers, as well as local and regional officials, observed the exhumations but did nothing to stop them.

As of Oct. 19, Satybaldiyeva’s family did not know the whereabouts of the body.

“I pray that they did not throw away the body somewhere. I hope that we can soon find out where my mother’s body is,” said Satybaldiyeva’s daughter, Zhyldyz Azayeva. “I continue in my faith in Jesus Christ, but I am afraid for my own life, for my 19-year-old daughter and 80-year-old father.” (F18)