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Photo courtesy of Tom Benz

Nancy Hendrix (center), hosting coordinator for Bridges of Faith, participates in a recent outreach in Ukraine.

# Bridges of Faith

## Clanton-based ministry connects families with Ukrainian orphans

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

People say all the time that one missions trip can change your life — and Kenneth Garner said he's proof of that.

"I went on my first trip to Ukraine with Bridges of Faith in 2013 and the Lord really touched my heart," said Garner, who was pastor of Holtville Riverside Baptist Church, Wetumpka, at the time. "I fell in

love with the Ukrainian children."

Not only that — he got to know his future wife, Rachel, on that trip and the two began to chase that vision of ministry together. They got married in 2014 and in the years that followed they became more and more involved with Bridges of Faith, an Alabama-based organization that ministers to Ukrainian orphans. They went on trips to visit orphanages. They hosted orphans in their home in the summers and at Christmas through the organization's homestay program.

Then in 2017, Garner left his pastorate to become the full-time director of operations for Bridges of Faith.

He said being involved with the ministry is like being "the tip of the spear."

"You're going into places where children ordinarily don't hear the message of the gospel and with that comes an anointing and a special presence of the Lord," Garner said. "I would love for everyone to have the opportunity to experience it."

That's why he leads missions trips now for Bridges of Faith and encourages everyone to consider hosting Ukrainian orphans in their homes.

"You get to build a relationship with them and watch them go from being cold and distant to warm and showing love," Garner said. "It's a blessing to watch their hearts open-

ing up to love and to the gospel."

Nancy Hendrix, hosting coordinator for Bridges of Faith, said Alabama families can get involved by going on trips to do ministry and humanitarian aid, hosting children in their homes or volunteering at the ministry's BridgeStone camp, located seven miles west of I-65 in Clanton. The camp hosts children several times a year for several weeks at a time.

### 'At risk' children

"We bring school-age children to Alabama — anywhere from age 6 to 16," Hendrix said. "These are the children who are at risk."

Without intervention statistically once they leave the orphanage 10 percent of those children will  
(See 'Ministry,' page 19)

To watch the videos from this week's issue, visit our YouTube channel or use the HP Reveal app on your phone or tablet and hover over the segments marked "AR."

For more information, visit [bridgesoffaith.com](http://bridgesoffaith.com).

# COMMENT

## God Cares for You

The words penned by the Apostle Peter were revolutionary. “God cares for you,” he boldly assured Christians caught up in the midst of persecution sweeping Asia Minor or modern-day Turkey (1 Pet. 5:7).

And because God cared for them, the apostle urged his readers to humble themselves and cast all their anxieties and cares upon God.

The gods of Greece and Rome did not care about people. They cared only about themselves. They were capricious and selfish, caring primarily about their own status.

Even today one searches in vain among the various religions for a message that “God cares for you.” It is not found in the determinism of Islam. It is not found in the Buddhist search for oneness or in Hindu’s escape into nothingness.

Only the Christian faith proclaims, “God cares for you.” As an individual person you have value to God. Peter’s message really was revolutionary. It still is.

### In His own image

Perhaps we should know God cares for us. God created each human being in His own image. That gives inestimable value to each individual. The Christian faith is built on the truth that God acted in Jesus Christ to offer salvation to anyone who will accept God’s gift of forgiveness. That is the message of the cross where Jesus paid the price for sin.

Jesus died for each of us. That is how much God cares for us.

Unfortunately, in the midst of troubles we sometimes forget that revolutionary message. The pain of illness, the grief of loss, the brokenness of relationships, the disappointment of life, the shattered dreams — all of these can make us feel alone, forgotten.

One writer correctly observed that “affliction either drives us into the arms of God or it severs us from God.” All of us have seen that truth play out in the lives of friends and loved ones.

That is why it is important to repeat the Apostle Peter’s message. “God cares for you” and because He does you can cast all your anxieties and cares upon Him.



### THOUGHTS By Bob Terry

Peter was not the first to voice that message. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus described how God feeds the birds who neither plant nor harvest. He described the beauty of the wild lilies saying they were prettier than anything King Solomon ever had, even with all his wealth.

Jesus asked, “Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matt. 6:26). Could it be clearer? God cares for you. He is not indifferent toward you. He is not cruel.

God is compassionate to His children. God does not promise to resolve every issue as one might want, but He does promise to sustain each of us with His presence through every distress.

The Apostle Peter tied his admonition to cast one’s cares and anxieties on God with a surprising character trait — humility (1 Pet. 5:6). Because we humble ourselves before God we are able to cast our anxieties and worries on the One who cares for us, he writes.

Perhaps that connection should not be surprising at all. The one to whom we entrust our worries is the one we really trust the most.

Jesus taught that same lesson. When Jesus explained the parable of the sower He said some of the seeds that did not take root were because “the

worries of the world ... enter in and choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful” (Mark 4:19).

In Luke 21:34, Jesus added, “Be on guard, that your hearts may not be weighted down with ... the worries of life and that day come on you suddenly like a trap.”

When we trust ourselves with the “worries of the world” then our preoccupation with ourselves chokes out what God wants to do in our lives. When our lives are “weighted down” with the “worries of life” there is no energy left for fruitfulness in God’s work.

One writer observed that worry is a form of pride since it denies the power of a sovereign God and instead places trust in one’s self.

If that is true then the only antidote to worry is believing in and resting in God because “God cares for you” just as the Apostle Peter wrote.

The realization that God cares for us in all our circumstances and difficulties is what assures us that we can cast all our worries and anxieties on Him. Turning worries and anxieties over to God is not done arrogantly like “Here, you take them.” Rather it is because we know that God cares for us that we know He can be trusted with all our cares.

The Apostle Peter said we humble ourselves “under the mighty hand of God.” That is a strong biblical reference to the sufficiency of God to accomplish His purposes. Verses 3, 14 and 16 of Exodus 13 all

reference the “mighty hand of God” in delivering the Israelites from captivity. Ezekiel 20:23 uses the reference to bring Judah back from Babylon.

### ‘Hand of God’

The New Testament uses references to the “hand of God” in directing events around the birth of Jesus and the growth of the Christian faith (see Luke 1:66, Acts 13:11 and Acts 11:21).

The Apostle Peter is assuring those facing persecution that God is able to be trusted with all their worries and anxieties. The God of their past is the God of their present as well as the God of their future. He is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

That is a message for today as well.

Nowhere is it promised that everything will work out like one wants things to work out. Romans 8:28 does assure that God will work in all things He will be with us, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20) because “God cares for you.”

**“Nowhere is it promised  
that everything will  
work out like one  
wants things to work  
out. Romans 8:28 does  
assure that God will  
work in all things to  
bring about good.”**

### Coming June 9...

The Alabama Baptist is expanding its reach with a new and informative way to hear the headlines of the Christian faith. If you are in central Alabama, listen to TAB News every Saturday at noon on 92.5 FM and 850 AM — WXJC.





"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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# Handling of alleged sexual abuse

## In surprise move Southwestern Seminary's trustee executive committee cuts all ties with former president Paige Patterson

**T**he May 30 firing of long-time Southern Baptist leader Paige Patterson may have shocked the watching world, but it wasn't unfamiliar territory for the outspoken denominational personality.

In late October 1991, Patterson was fired from his role as president of Criswell College. Trustees voted 14-1 to fire him, stating he was spending too much time in Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) politics and not enough time in administration and fundraising for the school.

The decision was overturned a week later, however, when a group of SBC leaders at the time, including Adrian Rogers and Charles Stanley, came to his rescue.

### Unanimous vote

His recent termination from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas, likely will not garner the same result. Current SBC leaders are distancing themselves from Patterson and in some cases publicly affirming the decision.

The 12-member executive committee of SWBTS trustees convened May 30 in what an email from SWBTS called a "previously scheduled" meeting and voted unanimously to fire Patterson as the institution's president emeritus, effective immediately.

The decision, according to a statement, was based on "new information ... regarding the handling of an allegation of sexual abuse against a student during Dr. Patterson's presidency at another institution and resulting issues connected with statements to the board of trustees that are inconsistent with SWBTS's biblically informed core values."

Previously, the full 40-member board voted



Photo by Adam Covington/SWBTS

Paige Patterson, shown here at a May 22 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary trustee meeting, was terminated May 31 with all previous retirement benefits revoked.

to transition Patterson from president to president emeritus at a May 22-23 meeting that included 13 hours of executive session. As president emeritus, Patterson would have received ongoing compensation and an invitation to reside on campus as theologian in residence. Those benefits were revoked May 30.

The statement from SWBTS's trustees did not specify what allegation or institution prompted the firing. A May 22 *Washington Post* report, however, claimed Patterson told a female student at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) in Wake Forest, North Carolina, in 2003 not to report an alleged rape to the police. Later in 2003, Patter-

son moved from SEBTS to SWBTS.

SWBTS spokesman Charles Patrick said via email the full trustee board was notified of the decision to terminate Patterson before it was made public. Patterson also was notified in advance of the public announcement.

The trustee executive committee, according to the seminary's bylaws, "is authorized, between meetings of the board, to have charge of the seminary and to transact all trustee matters pertaining to the seminary which appear to demand immediate action and cannot be deferred until a regular meeting of the board."

The trustees' executive committee also announced May 31 that it "has reinstated" Nathan Montgomery "as an employee of SWBTS." Montgomery is the student worker who was fired May 2 after he tweeted an article critical of Patterson that called for his retirement.

Preceding the May 30 meeting, Megan Lively of North Carolina identified herself in a May 28 tweet as the anonymous woman referenced in the *Post's* May 22 article.

At press time Patterson had not released comments following his termination.

Brad Reynolds, vice president for academic affairs at Truett McConnell University in Cleveland, Georgia, wrote in a May 3 blog post: "My prediction concerning the aged reformer of the SBC is that he will ... kneel to his God and pray just as he has always done."

### Patterson defended

"In the past I have personally watched him return good for malicious attacks on him. I have been in his home when he was falsely accused and attacked as president of Criswell College. I had the privilege of watching this sage kneel to his knees one evening and pray for those who were attacking him."

Also coming to Patterson's defense is Sharayah Colter, a SWBTS student and wife of Patterson's former chief of staff. Colter released a 15-page document May 31 addressing, among other claims, the charge that Patterson counseled Lively not to report her alleged rape to police. Colter's document is accompanied by alleged 2003 correspondence between Patterson and Lively.

Colter also attempted to refute claims Patterson "did not handle appropriately an alleged case of sexual assault against a SWBTS student," addressed statements Patterson has made about domestic abuse and women's physical appearance and claimed Patterson did not direct Montgomery's firing. (TAB, BP)

## Southwestern Seminary cancels events

**S**outhwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas, has canceled planned on-campus events in conjunction with the June 12-13 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Dallas.

The Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders also announced Patterson will no longer speak at its June 10-11 meeting as previously scheduled, nor will he speak at the Council of Korean Southern Baptist Churches' June 11-13 meeting. And

the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors has announced they are no longer going to hold their annual gathering in October at SWBTS.

Patterson has not said whether he will deliver the convention sermon in Dallas, a task messengers at the 2017 SBC annual meeting elected him to fulfill. However, SWBTS interim president Jeffrey Bingham and the other five SBC seminary presidents will deliver a joint seminary report on Wednesday following the convention sermon. (TAB, BP)

## REACHING MUSLIMS

# 'A big part of **Success** is just **trying**'

## Global Gates leader urges Christians to be intentional about loving Muslims

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

**D**avid Garrison says if he could write a book about a dozen churches effectively engaging Muslims in the U.S., he would have a bestseller. "It would be quite the story," he said.

But he says he can't write it.

That's partly because people who are effectively reaching Muslims often keep it quiet. It can bring a lot of social pressure, even persecution, for new believers "so those who are winning Muslims to Christ don't talk about it much," said Garrison, author of "A Wind in the House of Islam" and executive director of Global Gates, a New York-based organization working to plant churches among unreached people groups in large cities.

But Garrison said the biggest reason he can't write a book about U.S. churches engaging Muslims effectively is because the number of churches engaging Muslims in a real, life-changing way "sadly is still rather minimal." In many cases, Christians "tip-toe around them or avoid them and in some cases actively oppose them," he said.

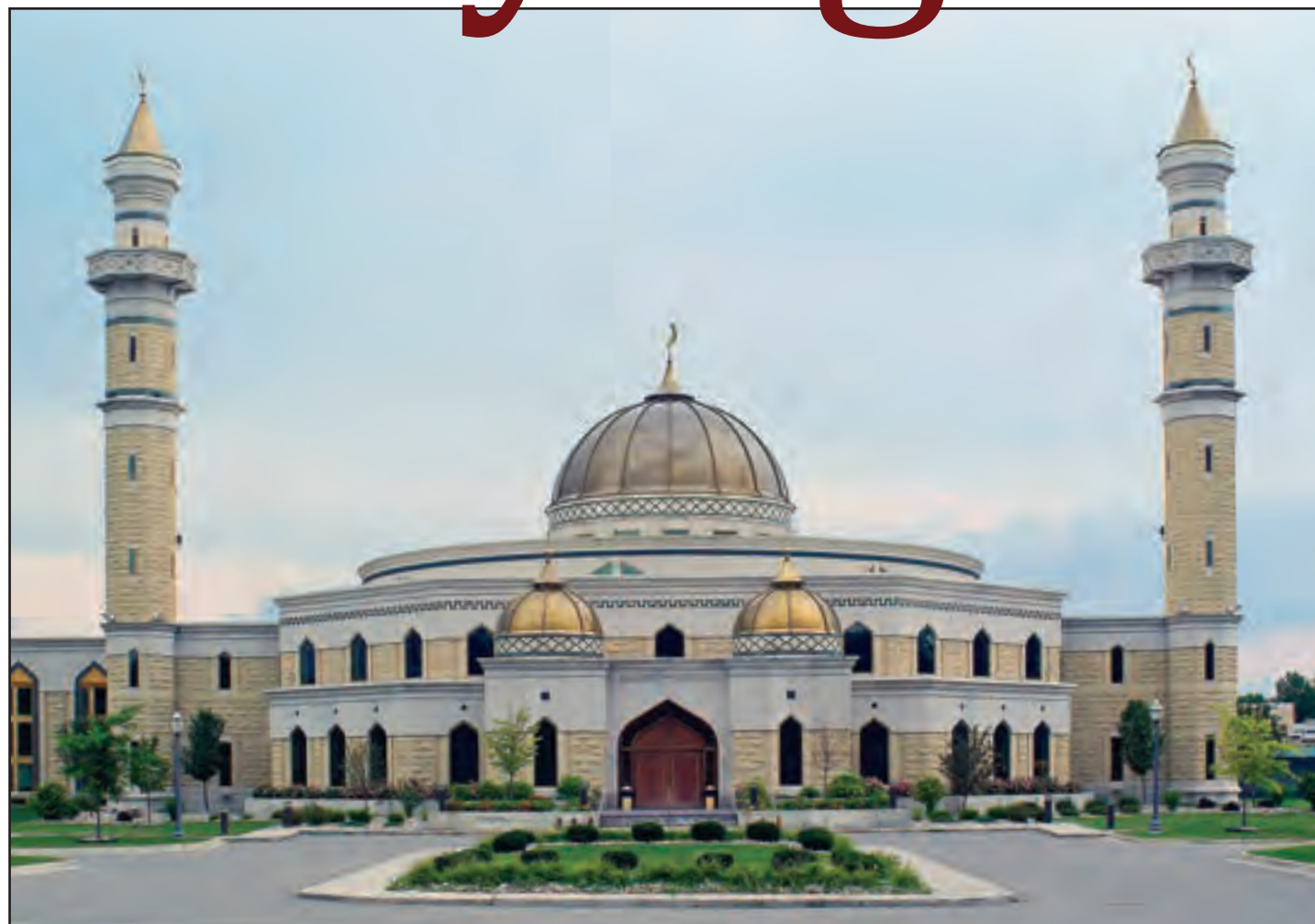
Because of that, Muslims in the U.S. are still "so surprised" when Christians reach out to them in love and compassion, he said. "A lot of Muslims are just waiting for Christians to reach out to them and show them that they don't hate them. That's the default perception."

Though still "remarkably small," the number of Christians interested in wanting to obey the Great Commission by reaching Muslims is growing, and that's encouraging, Garrison said. And small numbers of Christ followers are growing among Muslim populations too, he said.

### 'Greatest turning'

"Where we are seeing the greatest turning of Muslims in the Western Hemisphere is undoubtedly among Iranian Muslim background populations, both in Western Europe and in the U.S.," he said.

Others coming to faith in significant numbers are Bengalis and West African



THE ISLAMIC CENTER OF AMERICA IN DEARBORN, MICHIGAN

en.wikipedia.org

Muslims, Garrison said. Global Gates is one of the organizations leading out in this, equipping and sending church planters to engage Muslims in 18 urban areas from the West Coast to the Atlantic seaboard to Toronto.

"A big part of success is just trying," he said. "We're trying to be intentional and trying to find and use the best practices that have proven to be effective."

So far love seems to be the best practice, he said, even though many people who are willing to say they're trying to reach Muslims are doing so through debate and arguments.

"But from our perspective, that method (debate) hasn't seen a lot of fruit," Garrison said. "There is a place for apologetics and polemics in engaging Islam, because the truth matters and there is much within Islam that is simply false and needs to be exposed," he said. "Exalting the truth is an

important component, but we have seen nothing approaching a movement from people whose entry point is debate."

Intentional love that paves the way for truth seems to be the most effective method, he said.

Even though Global Gates has yet to see a movement in the West that's hit 1,000 conversions, they are "knocking on the door," Garrison said.

It's in no way on par with what's happening in the rest of the world, where movements of Muslims coming to faith in Christ are happening in much larger numbers, he said. "Today around the world we are seeing the greatest turning of Muslims to Christ in history."

We're just scratching the surface in the West, he said — but he's not giving up hope that that could happen in our day. In 1970 the U.S. had more than 100 mosques, but hundreds more have been built since

then, as more than 1 million Muslims have entered the country since that time. Alabama alone has more than 30 mosques, according to Hartford Institute for Religion Research.

### 'Looking for breakthroughs'

"We're still looking for breakthroughs in the West," Garrison said. "Maybe in the future the handfuls we are seeing today will become movements. That's what we pray for, because we love Muslims, not because we're trying to best them or defeat them but because God loves them and died for them."

He said he hopes Christians across the country will join with Global Gates to say "we don't know how this is going to happen but (we) know that God wants it and we want to be involved."

"We know God has a plan — every nation, tribe and language. And that includes Muslims," Garrison said. "Let's get on with it." ✝

For more information about Global Gates, visit [globalgates.info](http://globalgates.info).



BP photo

Today more than ever before, Muslims have access to the gospel through reading the Bible in their own language or through satellite TV or the internet, resulting in Christian converts.

# Finding Jesus

## Aspects of Islam itself prompt Muslims to search for more, turn to Christ

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

**W**hen missionary doctor Martha Myers was shot and killed in Yemen in 2002, it may have looked like it started with hate.

But in reality, it started with love, said David Garrison, executive director of Global Gates and author of “A Wind in the House of Islam.”

Myers, an International Mission Board missionary from Alabama, had spent her life showing the women of that Muslim country what Jesus’ love looked like and one of those, a young woman struggling with infertility, had gone home and told her husband about it.

“She said to him, ‘No one has ever shown me the love that that doctor showed me,’” Garrison said. “Her husband replied, ‘That kind of love would change my country and turn it upside down.’ He felt he had to stop it.”

The man might’ve responded with heart-

breaking violence, but it’s that same gripping realization of love that is prompting other Muslims around the world to leave their religion behind and embrace Christ, Garrison said.

He knows that because he’s seen it happen over and over all around the world.

“In talking with former Muslims who now follow Christ, there were three surprising things within Islam that led many of them to look beyond Islam and ultimately find Jesus,” he said.

One of them, he said, is simply seeing who Jesus is.

If you ask Muslims to describe Muhammed, the founder of Islam, many of them describe someone who “sounds a lot like Jesus” — kind, loving and peaceable, Garrison said.

“Many Muslims don’t know the historical Muhammed,” he said. “They have

heard stories, but they don’t know the man himself — a man who had multiple wives, accumulated a lot of wealth and territory and had a lot of blood on his hands.”

So many Muslims coming out of Islam to faith in Christ in recent decades are actually well-educated people, Garrison said.

“They know the historical Muhammed’s character well, and when they compare it to Jesus, they say there’s no comparison.”

One thing Christians can do to encourage Muslims toward Jesus is to suggest they find out more about the Muhammed of history for themselves, he said.

That’s how Nabeel Qureshi, the author of

“Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus” came to faith, Garrison said.

“The Muhammed he grew up adoring was the sum of all virtues, a sugar-coated, idealized man. When he went back and read some of Islam’s own historical documents about the founder of Islam, he was stunned and horrified.”

Another seed of Islam that sometimes pushes Muslims toward Jesus is the Quran itself, Garrison said.

The Quran, Muslims’ holy book, was originally written in Arabic, but there’s been a trend in the past couple of decades of translating it into other languages, he said.

“It’s amazing how many Muslim background believers said that when they read the Quran in their own language, they real-

ized for the first time that they were lost because there was no plan of salvation in the Quran.”

But even though there’s no sure forgiveness spelled out in the Quran, something else is mentioned in the Quran 96 times — Jesus.

“Jesus is venerated in the Quran,” Garrison said. Not everything in there about Jesus is accurate — and there are a lot of anti-gospel things in the Quran — but it does portray Jesus as “one of the righteous ones” and never mentions Him committing any sin.

### Looking into Jesus

It’s enough to encourage an interest to look into who Jesus is, Garrison said. “Muslims who read it in their own language sometimes say, ‘I need to know more about Jesus.’ Then they read the New Testament and find a solution to their sin problem.”

A third seed of Islam that is driving many Muslims to the gospel is the violence within Islam, Garrison said.

Oftentimes it is Muslim-on-Muslim violence that compels many Muslims to seek a better way, he said. Other times it’s violence like the act that killed Myers in the Baptist hospital in Yemen 16 years ago.

“With conflict after conflict, sometimes Muslims say, ‘This cannot be Allah’s perfect will,’” Garrison said.

And today more than ever before, they have access to an alternative message through reading the Bible in their own language or through satellite TV or the internet.

“That’s opening up doors of gospel access,” he said.†

**“With conflict after conflict, sometimes Muslims say, ‘This cannot be Allah’s perfect will.’”**

**David Garrison  
author and executive  
director of Global Gates**

## Amid persecution, Church in Egypt sees people turning to Christ

**E**ven though Christians in Egypt have faced deadly bombings and persecution for years, Christian leaders there say multitudes are coming to Christ.

That “heavenly” news doesn’t make it to the West often, they said.

Sameh Hanna, associate pastor at the Evangelical Church in Cairo, said spirits are “very, very good” among the nation’s Christians.

“Not because the situation is good or bad — that is not the reason,” he said, according to The Christian Post. “We know what is going on spiritually. We see things that not everybody is seeing. We see things you are not hear-

ing. We see the multitude coming to the knowledge of Christ from every background, so this brings joy to us.”

David Curry, president of Open Doors USA, which advocates for the persecuted

Church around the world, told the Post that despite the pain and shock of violent attacks, Christians are clinging to their faith.

The Coptic Christian church there is “an inspiring group that has been under so much pressure for their faith and yet they are standing strong and really showing the love of Jesus in the face of great opposition,” Curry said. (TAB)



**“Muslims who read [the Quran] in their own language sometimes say, ‘I need to know more about Jesus.’ Then they read the New Testament and find a solution to their sin problem.”**

**David Garrison  
author and executive director of Global Gates**

## REACHING MUSLIMS

# 'Enormous' impact

## Where Christians fail to show compassion, Muslims may fill gaps, spread Islam

**C**hristians have a long history of combatting social injustice. In some cases, that's been on a personal level. In other cases, it's been through activism against slavery, apartheid, abortion or human trafficking.

But Christian history also is marred with episodes of Christians ignoring social injustice — even when the needs are glaring, said David Garrison, executive director of Global Gates and author of “A Wind in the House of Islam.”

These days when that happens in the U.S., Muslims take notice.

“Muslims in America notice when Christians turn a blind eye to societal injustice and they are quick to fill the gaps,” Garrison said.

And when that happens, sometimes people with a deep need for justice find themselves drawn to Islam, Garrison said.

For years the largest sector of the U.S. to respond to Islam's appeal has been sectors of the African-American community, particularly in America's prisons and congested urban centers, he said.

“Though Christians within the African-American community have provided a strong voice for the gospel, many white evangelicals were less responsive to the discontent within the African-American community. The result was the emergence of some of America's first homegrown Muslims,” Garrison said.

### 'Targeted demographic'

And now he said it's possible that history is repeating itself in the Hispanic community.

“While prayer walking through the streets of a New York City neighborhood filled with Muslim families, mosques and madrasas (Islamic schools), my wife and I couldn't help (but) notice the Qurans prominently displayed in shop windows often accompanied by a small sign that read, ‘Available in Spanish,’” Garrison said.



‘Muslims in America notice when Christians turn a blind eye to societal injustice and they are quick to fill in the gaps,’ said David Garrison, author and executive director of Global Gates.

They then remembered that the U.S. is home to between 11 and 13 million undocumented Spanish-speaking immigrants and they realized the gravity of the situation.

“Latinos in America are Islam's next targeted demographic,” Garrison said. “I'm not trying to stake out a political position for or against immigration. What I am saying is that we can't afford to ignore the injustice of 11 to 13 million persons — men, women and children — with no legal status in our country.”

Many Muslim Americans are telling these undocumented Hispanics they will stand with them and support them, that Allah is a god of justice, Garrison said.

“Hispanics in America are hearing that message and responding. Islam is growing within

the Latino communities of America, particularly within undocumented communities.”

Christians need to remember that their God is a God of justice too, he said.

“So when we ignore a social injustice, we are ignoring a part of our own gospel message.”

And when Christians avoid taking a lead in resolving the legal status of this enormous undocumented immigrant population, the problem doesn't go away, Garrison said.

### 'Present a voice for Christ'

“In today's America there is someone else ready to step into the role that we vacate. But when we sit down at the table with others to address these challenges, we may not always get our way, but we will at least be able to present a voice for Christ into the conversation.”

He urged Christians to see the enormous influx of immigrants into the U.S. as an opportunity to fulfill the Great Commission and share the gospel with the whole world.

Pointing to Acts 17:26–27, he noted that God's Word says the place where immigrants land is no accident.

“I believe the Apostle Paul is reminding us that God brought them here ‘so that [they] would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him.’ As Christians, we certainly have a role to play in this,” Garrison said. (TAB)

## What is Ramadan and why should Christians care?

**I**magine not eating or drinking during daylight hours for 28 days straight. Every year during the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset in an effort to hear Allah, the god of Islam, better. This year Ramadan was scheduled to start in the U.S. on May 15 and end June 14, according to the lunar calendar.

If you were to visit an observant Muslim country during this time, you would find restaurants closed during daylight hours. Refrigerated boxes of soft drinks found on the sidewalk on most streets are padlocked. Cigarette venders are missing from the daily street traffic.

Until sunset approaches and dinner preparations can finally be made, many normal patterns of life are completely halted.

### Spiritual focus

The month of Ramadan is a time when Muslims are very aware of dreams and visions. They believe dreams are a direct way Allah chooses to reveal himself to people.

During this time of heightened spiritual focus, Muslims are often seeking a special message or revelation from Allah. As Christians have prayed earnestly for their Muslim neighbors and friends during this season, they hear reports of dreams and visions in which Jesus appears to these friends and draws them to Himself.

Here are a couple of questions you could use to kick-start a spiritual conversation with one of your Muslim friends during Ramadan:

► Fasting during Ramadan seems to be both a personal and corporate experience. Can you help me understand some of the most meaningful aspects of this month for you and your community?

► As a Muslim, what do you mean by taqwa (awareness of Allah)?

Source: IMB.org, TAB

## Muslim landscape in Alabama

**Fewer than 50,000 people in Alabama claim to be Muslim and they reside in various parts of the state:**

Birmingham and Central Alabama	12 mosques	1 school
Huntsville and North Alabama	5 mosques	1 school
Mobile and South Alabama	7 mosques	3 schools
Montgomery and South Central Alabama	7 mosques	No schools

Source: www.salatomic.com

Maria (left) prays silently as an IMB worker leads the congregation of immigrants in prayer.

# ‘Desire to serve’



IMB photo

## Immigrants cross cultural boundaries to reach fellow immigrants in Vienna

**M**aria felt God nudge her to share Christ with Persians. There was just one problem. Maria didn't know any Persians. In fact, she didn't know exactly what a Persian was — there's no Persian language and no Persia on the map.

But sure enough, within a week Maria met a girl from Iran. When Maria asked her what language she spoke, the girl said “Persian” and Maria knew what God was talking about. She invited the young lady to study the Bible.

Maria didn't set out to start a new Persian church. She was just obeying God. But that Bible study has now grown to more than 100 people, a mixture of former Muslims from Iran and Afghanistan, former Buddhists from Vietnam and former atheists from Austria.

“The girl started coming to her Bible study and bringing friends. She got saved and started sharing her faith with others, and it was just spontaneous,” said Roger Hartsill, an International Mission Board

(IMB) worker from Willowbrook Baptist Church, Huntsville, who is helping Maria.

His wife, Diana, agreed.

“Maria's always had the desire to serve the Lord. [She] decided to do something in her home, but she sort of got in over her head, and we've pitched in to help her,” Diana Hartsill said. “It's been exciting just to see what God is doing through her there.”

Maria came to Vienna from Brazil more than a decade ago. She had completed a seminary degree as well as a music degree in Brazil and was offered a scholarship to study opera in Vienna. She was quite popular there, even singing at Billy Graham crusades. After finishing her studies Maria settled in Vienna, married an Austrian and embarked on a career, but her lifelong call to missions never dissipated.

In 2014 she started a Bible study in her home. By the end of that year, two Iranians, two Vietnamese and one Austrian had become Christians and been baptized. Twelve new converts, most of whom were Iranian

immigrants, were added to their number by spring of 2015. The Bible study became a church.

Maria has now quit her job to be a missionary full time. Her husband works to support them.

“When the work suddenly began to reach mostly Muslim men, (Maria) wisely sought out male pastors (including myself) ... as the body has been in transition from an outreach group in her home, to a house church and then to a recognized church within the Austrian Baptist Convention,” said Roger Hartsill, who is mentoring and leading Maria from his home in Germany.

He is in a unique position to help. The Hartsills began their ministry with IMB in South America. They moved to Europe for the express purpose of mobilizing South American believers who have emigrated to Europe.

The Hartsills want to help Latinos in Europe spread the gospel wherever they go. In some cases, the Hartsills help Latinos find pathways to go beyond Europe to unreached peoples in other parts of the world. But they also see a tremendous opportunity to mobilize Latinos to specifically reach out to other immigrants and refugees in Europe.

“We have discovered that oftentimes a believing immigrant in Europe from elsewhere can more easily connect with the refugee or immigrant than the nationals can,” Roger Hartsill said.

### God's work

Diana Hartsill said, “Here in Europe, our task is to mobilize (South American) people to reach both Europeans and refugees living among them.” Both of these groups are being reached by the work God is doing through Maria.

Since the Hartsills have started working with Maria, God has continued to bless the church plant. In November 2015, 22 former Muslims — all Iranians and Afghans — were baptized. In April 2016 another 18 Iranians and Afghans were baptized, as well as a local Austrian doctor who has become a strong supporter of the new church. Nine-

teen more baptisms were celebrated May 28, 2016, including Vietnamese, Afghans and Iranians. In August 2016, 18 former Muslims followed Christ in believer's baptism. In December 2016, 16 were baptized and in March 2017, 11 more.

“This new work started from zero and has seen 94 adult baptisms in less than two years,” Roger Hartsill said. “Nearly all of the new converts are immigrants from Iran, Afghanistan or Vietnam — places where missionaries cannot freely enter. The growth is the result of these new believers sharing their newfound faith with others from their people groups.”

### Long discipleship road

Most of the teaching and discipleship must be done through translators or in a second language, and it's a long discipleship road — they often have many misconceptions of Christianity to work through.

Their religious backgrounds also put many at risk. Often the new Christians can never return to their families or home countries because of their conversions. They fear for the safety of loved ones who still live in their homelands. There is always the risk of an attack on Christians or on the church, even in Europe. Maria herself was poisoned once by an enemy of the gospel who infiltrated the church, but she said she knows the risk is worth it.

Roger Hartsill visits several times a year to help with baptisms, discuss logistical problems and wrestle through issues that come from having believers from Muslim, Buddhist and Catholic backgrounds in this burgeoning church family.

“My role is primarily as a coach,” Roger Hartsill said. “We have identified an Iranian man who feels called to ministry and whom we hope will assume the role of pastor for this church in the near future. His immigrant status is still pending, but he is already teaching new converts in the church's discipleship training.”

God has blessed this work, but that does not mean the work is easy. The new church faces many challenges. (IMB)

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Names changed for security reasons.*



IMB photo

Immigrants worship Jesus together at the new Baptist church in Vienna, Austria.



# Across ALABAMA'S Associations

## BIBB

► **First Church, Woodstock**, will host a concert featuring the Chuck Wagon Gang on June 9, 7 p.m. For more information call 205-516-5134.

## BIRMINGHAM

► **Mark Gainey** is the new pastor of **First Church, Fultondale**. He previously served as pastor of Deerfoot Church, Trussville. He holds a bachelor's degree from Troy University, a master's degree from Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham and a doctorate from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Tasha, have four children. ► **Shades Mountain Church, Birmingham**, will hold a concert featuring the choirs of Shades Mountain Church; Hunter Street Church, Hoover; and First Church, Trussville, on June 13, 7 p.m. Danny Wood is pastor.



GAINEY

## COFFEE

► **County Line Church, Enterprise**, will host a day camp for preschool through sixth grade kids June 21, 12:30–5:30 p.m. The theme will be music and art. A family meal and activity at 5:30 p.m. will conclude the day. Online registration is

available at clbconthe.net. For more information call 334-347-6082. Danny Wiggins is pastor. ► **Newbia Church, Elba**, will hold VBS on June 22, 6–8:30 p.m. and June 23, 10 a.m.–3 p.m. The closing program will be June 24, 11 a.m. Will Jordan is pastor.

## LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

► **New Bethel Church, Collinsville**, will hold a singing featuring the Chris Connell Family on June 10, 6 p.m.

## SHELBY

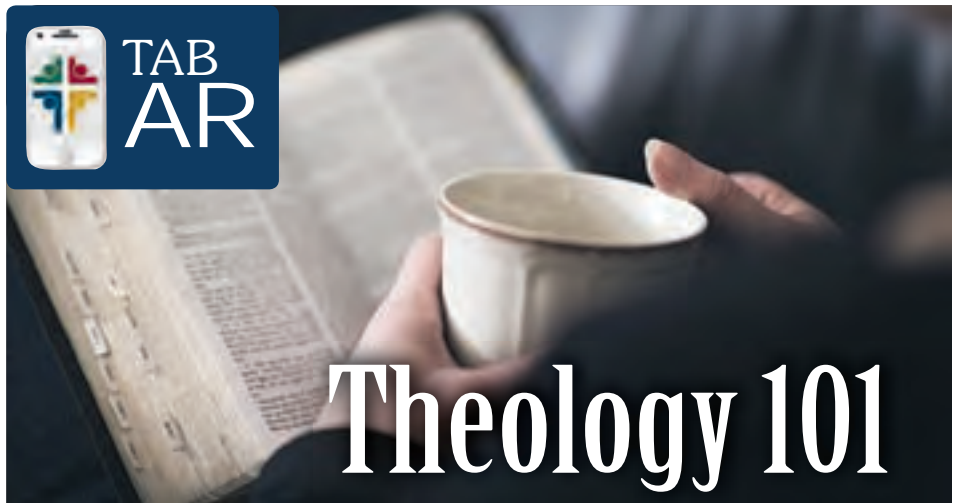
► Shelby Association recently voted to bring **Iglesia Bautista Jesús el Buen Pastor (Jesus the Good Shepherd Baptist Church), Pelham**, and **North Shelby Vietnamese Church, Birmingham**, into the association as its first international congregations. Hugh Richardson is director of missions.

## TALLAPOOSA

► **Jim Jackson** is the new interim pastor of **Wayside Church, Alexander City**. He previously served as director of missions for Elmore Association. He and his wife, Betty, have three children and seven grandchildren.

## OTHER

► **The Library in the Forest, Vestavia Hills**, will hold a free screening of the film "Loving" on June 17, 2:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. For more information call 205-978-0155.✝



# Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

## Christology Through Imagery

# Shepherd of the Sheep

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

About six weeks ago Theology 101 gave thought to some of the functional titles given to Christ, each of which conveys to us something of the significance of His person and work. One such title considered at that time was that of "shepherd," based on the familiar confession of the psalmist, "The Lord is my Shepherd" (Ps. 23:1). In that session this image was enlarged upon by the three adjectives that the New Testament attaches to the shepherd imagery: the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd. This week we return to the imagery of Christ as a shepherd by recalling the extended analogy in John 10, in which the phrase "the Shepherd of the sheep" introduces the Good Shepherd imagery (John 10:2).

A return to this image of Christ reminds us that one of the favorite biblical pictures of God's loving care is that of a good and faithful shepherd. Thinking of Christ as the Shepherd of the sheep yields a number of suggestive ideas about His ministry in our lives. For one thing, in biblical times a shepherd could have been said to live with his sheep. He went where they went and they went where he went. In pleasant weather the shepherd was with his sheep, but also he was with them in stormy weather. If the sheep encountered danger, their shepherd was with them. Shepherd and sheep lived in close relation with one another. As our Good Shepherd, Christ is with us. His parting words to His earliest followers remains in effect: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). To activate this promise He followed His ascension with the sending of His earthly representative, the Holy Spirit, to abide with us collectively and in us individually.

As the Shepherd of His sheep, He knows us. As John 10:3 reminds us, "He calls his own sheep by name." As our Shepherd, Christ knows us

intimately and accurately. He knows when we've been good or when we've been bad. He knows our wanderings and shortcomings, yet He loves us with unquenchable fervor. He knows our strengths as well as our weaknesses. He knows our abilities and disabilities.

This good Shepherd of the sheep not only knows us but also cares for us. While He may discipline and correct us when we need it, He delights to gently lead us. When the need is great, He takes us to green pastures and still waters, as Psalm 23 so poetically describes.

Many of us may remember paintings of Christ as a shepherd. One that stands out in my memory from childhood is that of Christ carrying a lamb in His arms and near to His heart. Spiritually speaking, He has room for all of us in His bosom. His care for us extends to protecting us from spiritual dangers, such dangers that lurk in our own sinful natures, as well as those posed by the devil as a roaring lion seeking to devour us and those that come against us from our fallen world.

## Totally secure

Since Christ is the Shepherd of the sheep, we are totally secure, safely enfolded in His keeping power and presence. His care extends from time into eternity. As His sheep we will never perish and never be snatched from His hand. One day the grand goal of the Shepherd of the sheep will be realized when we are safely with Him having become "one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:16).✝

*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.*



## Southside BC encourages girls to 'Be-YOU-tiful'



Photo courtesy of Hope's Choice

Southside Baptist Church, Fayette, hosts 'Be-YOU-tiful' with Hope's Choice of Alabama for 25 girls ages 9–12 on May 4. Girls were encouraged to focus on what God says about beauty and each person's unique personality. Discussion topics included texting, social media use and bullying. 'I think in today's society, it is so important to remind these young girls they are worthy, beautiful and loved,' said Kasey Kennedy, executive director of Hope's Choice. The night ended with crafts and a photo booth. Robert Parrish is pastor.

FOCUS on One Mission

Alabama Baptist STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS



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Prayerwalking is an exercise of obedience to Christ. It is an act of intercession on behalf of others. Prayerwalking is an attempt to saturate an area where people live with prayer, praying that they might come to the love of Christ.

I have experienced firsthand the joy of prayerwalking. Most memorably, I have joined others in the act of prayerwalking in other countries where people need to hear and heed the Gospel of Christ. I have prayerwalked with international missionaries and fellow state missionaries the streets of various cities in distant parts of the world.

During my tenure as a state missionary, I have also learned to do some prayer driving. Since I am often in my vehicle and traveling the highways and byways of Alabama and beyond, I have learned to focus my attention on the communities and cities across our landscape.



While entering an area, I pray generally for the people who live there. When passing churches — many of them I know well — I pray for the pastor by name and the family of faith as well. My prayer for the church is that they will always see themselves as an outpost of the Kingdom of God and a church family on mission with the Great Commission.

If I pass a city hall or the courthouse, I pray for the political leaders of that area. When I pass through major cities on the interstate, I pray for those metro areas too. In the open rural areas of our state, I remember those who work in agriculture.

With all the roadwork on our interstates, I find myself sitting in traffic trying not to be frustrated. The signs that indicate roadwork are abundant in our state currently. I thought I saw a sign that indicated "Roadwork Next 187 Miles." That was misreading on my part, but I must admit that

I sometimes think the work on the roads is endless.

What is a good use of the time idling in traffic or rolling at a snail's pace in roadwork-related traffic? Looking at Waze (a traffic and navigation app) and trying to see how many more miles of frustration I have? No, I try to remind myself that this is a good time to pray.

My prayer list is no different from yours. I pray for the needs of people. I seek to unburden myself of the worries and concerns that weigh heavily upon my heart. I see the cars around me, and I whisper a prayer for those people who are unknown to me.

Prayer driving is becoming a spiritual discipline for me. It has helped me to be in touch with the Lord and the needs of others. It has calmed my spirit and cleared my mind. There are times when I find myself lost in

thought and prayer as I make my way traveling.

I cannot say that I enjoy driving in traffic or in the roadwork areas of Alabama, but prayer driving has served to remind me that this state is my first mission field and therefore it needs to be immersed in prayer. Perhaps you can find

some unique times of prayer while driving. It may bring some clearer focus in your walk with the Lord.

**Disclaimer!** Do not do prayer driving with your eyes closed. Seriously, consider prayer driving as a contemporary application of Paul's admonition, "Pray without ceasing." I think the apostle would say, "AMEN."

By Rick Lance  
State Missionary

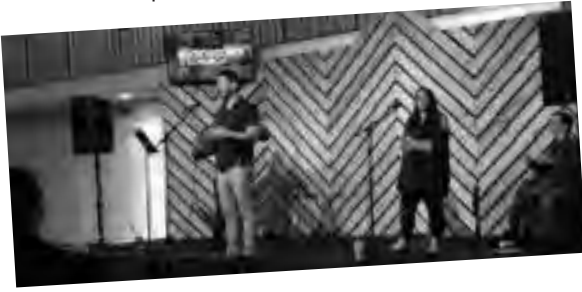


1 Corinthians 4:1-2

# Celebrating a New Baby

We celebrate new babies in our family, as I am sure you do in yours.

On April 1, the Renascent Church launched in the Mobile Baptist Association. A new baby church has been born into the Alabama Baptist family.



at every juncture. He excitedly told me that he had around 50 people in attendance for his first weekly worship service.

We thank God, in advance, for the many people who will receive Christ and be

disciplined as a result of this planter and the Renascent family cooperating with Jesus in His kingdom.

What a great birthdate! It was Resurrection Day, the day we set aside to celebrate the fact that our Lord is Risen Indeed!

April 1 is also considered April Fool's Day. One might conclude that it is foolish to start new churches in a state that already has 3,269 churches affiliated with the Alabama Baptist family. However, more than 2 million people in our state do not attend anyone's church. Justin Hase, Renascent's pastor of teaching, has heard us say, "Never embark alone."

Justin has been through our process of assessment, training and coaching. He has followed through

By Lamar Duke  
State Missionary



For more information about church planting among and by 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](mailto:lduke@alsbom.org).

# WHY I BELIEVE IN THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM



Jay Stewart

When I think of the Cooperative Program, I think of the Great Commission because I see how they work in tandem. There are so many ways the Kingdom of God has been furthered through the generous gifts of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

I've seen the CP at work firsthand in our seminaries and on the mission field. I've personally experienced the blessing of the CP through training in leadership and discipleship, and the list could go on and on.

I'd like to share one specific instance of the Cooperative Program in action through the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. Church safety and security has been a topic on many people's minds. Our director of missions, Chris Crain, in partnership with the SBOM, initiated a church safety and security summit which was led by State Missionary Mark Wakefield.

We had multiple churches represented with approximately 150 in attendance. The churches in attendance received a comprehensive three-hour training on church security at no cost to those in attendance. This is just one example of our Cooperative Program dollars being put to good use.

The Cooperative Program is a wonderful way for churches of every size to participate in the Great Commission as a body of believers. I encourage every pastor and lay leader to support ministry through the Cooperative Program by giving a portion of your church's undesignated offerings on a consistent basis. It is an act of worship, obedience and faith that I believe God honors and blesses.  
— Jay Stewart, pastor, First Baptist Church, Ashville (St. Clair Association)



**Senior Adult Revival**  
Thursday, September 13 • 9 a.m. - Noon  
Twelfth Street Baptist Church, Rainbow City

**Join other worshipers** as we praise God through song, pray to God for revival and prepare our hearts for God's message that day.

Special guests include Mat Alexander, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Gadsden, and Craig Carlisle, director of missions of the Etowah Baptist Association.

You will want to browse the many displays set up by various ministry leaders at the ministry fair. No meals are provided and there is no cost. **Just come!** For more information, please contact State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, or (334) 613-2221, [emitchell@alsbom.org](mailto:emitchell@alsbom.org).



# Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering

WEEK OF  
**PRAYER**  
FOR STATE MISSIONS  
**SEPTEMBER 9-16, 2018**

**YOUR GIFTS HELP SUPPORT THESE GREAT COMMISSION MINISTRIES:**

- ALABAMA WMU
- DISASTER RELIEF
- CHURCH PLANTING
- PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS
- CHURCH REVITALIZATION

[myers-mallory.org](http://myers-mallory.org)



Alabama Baptist  
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**State Goal:  
\$1,000,000**



**ONE MISSION:** The Great Commission **ONE PROGRAM:** The Cooperative Program **MANY MINISTRIES:** Great Commission Ministries

*Saturday, August 18 • 9 a.m. - Noon*

## **ONE DAY TRAINING**

**Choose from two locations:**  
East Gadsden Baptist Church  
First Baptist Church, Troy

This leadership training opportunity is open to all leaders/directors of any WMU age-level group, Women's Ministry or Royal Ambassadors. (This is a great opportunity for those who are unable to attend Equip in July at Shocco Springs.)

For more information, including cost, please contact Kathryn Helms at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 325, or (334) 613-2325, [khelms@alsbom.org](mailto:khelms@alsbom.org).

FOCUS on One Mission

**Abide**  
FAITHFUL LIVING IN EVERY STAGE

An experience for women in their 20s and 30s

*"and they shall abide, for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth."*  
Micah 5:4b ASV

*featuring*

Bible study with author  
**Katie Orr**

*experience*  
time away at WorldSong to connect with God and connect with others as together we find the beauty of abiding in Jesus in the midst of the chaos of everyday life

SEPTEMBER 21-22, 2018  
WorldSong Missions Place, Cook Springs  
Check in 6-7pm Friday, event starts at 7pm

For more info and cost:  
[AlabamaWMU.org/abide](http://AlabamaWMU.org/abide)

**JULY** 20-21  
2018

ALABAMA BAPTIST STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS PRESENTS

**speak**  
Tell Your Story

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MONTGOMERY  
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worship with  
**Ryan John Band**

messages from  
Adam Robinson  
Ismael Pruitt  
Sean Emory

*in concert*  
**Rend Collective**

REGISTER ONLINE  
**SPEAK.YMLINK.ORG**

The event is made possible by gifts of Alabama Baptists through the Cooperative Program.

ONEMISSION TheGreatCommissionONEPROGRAM TheCooperativeProgramMANYMINISTRIES GreatCommissionMinistries

**EQUIP**  
Leadership Training of Alabama WMU

FRIDAY-SATURDAY  
JULY 27-28

SHOCCO SPRINGS

**EQUIP is for EVERYONE**  
not just leaders!

FEATURES:

- In-depth training for new and experienced leaders.
- Personal and leadership enrichment conferences.
- Testimonies of North American and international missionaries.
- Bible study and worship.
- Equipping for missions, ministry and life.

REGISTRATION/PRICING: [Shocco.org](http://Shocco.org) or 1-800-280-1105

OTHER ONLINE INFO: [AlabamaWMU.org/training](http://AlabamaWMU.org/training)

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

# MIX

## MusiCamp@Shocco!

Monday-Friday, July 16-20  
Shocco Springs

For grades 3-5, 6, 7-10. If being at music camp isn't enough, here are a few more things we'll be doing: Wet Willie



- Super Slide • Putt-Putt Golf • Basketball • Aqua Jumps • Team Relays • Bazooka Ball • Disc Golf • Rock Wall • Ropes Course • Paintball • Drift Bikes • Swimming • Zip-lining!



**Register online and get more**

**info, including cost, at [mixmusiccamp.org](http://mixmusiccamp.org) or please contact Ministry Assistant Cindy Parrish at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 230, or (334) 613-2230, [cparrish@alsbom.org](mailto:cparrish@alsbom.org).**

# ACTS 1:8 Connections Celebration

Thursday, July 12 • 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Taylor Road Baptist Church, Montgomery

Global Missions invites you to join us at the **Acts 1:8 Connections Celebration**. Missionaries who serve in Alabama, missionaries from Alabama who serve in the U.S. and missionaries from Alabama who serve internationally will be with us to share.

- Participate in seminars with missionaries who are from Alabama and serve all over the world.
- Learn how to connect with these friends to help with their work.
- Meet others who are interested in fulfilling the Great Commission.
- Lunch included with registration fee.



GLOBALMISSIONS

For more information about registration, please go online to [a18c.org/connectconf](http://a18c.org/connectconf) or contact State Missionary Scotty Goldman at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 387, or (334) 613-2387, [sgoldman@alsbom.org](mailto:sgoldman@alsbom.org).

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



GRADES 1-6

# The greatest adventure in life begins at the cross of Christ

-David Jeremiah

July 9-11 for boys  
July 11-13 for girls

Earle Trent Assembly Camp, Florence

Children will be involved in campcraft, mission classes and outside activities like canoeing, fire building, swimming, etc.

For more information contact Jennifer Richardson at (256) 383-7021, [jennifer.richardson@clbaptist.com](mailto:jennifer.richardson@clbaptist.com).

In partnership with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and Colbert-Lauderdale Association.

# Upcoming Worship & Music Leadership Enrichment Event

## Children's Choir Summit Friday and Saturday • July 13-14 • Shooco Springs

This is the training event that you've been needing for your Children's Choir Leaders. Experience the fun of teaching music to any age of preschooler or child. Discover new ways to make choir or music time a favorite for kids. Watch the love for worship come alive. Mingle with others in similar situations. Learn to use games and toys to add more excitement in your music time, plus more hands-on learning and fun in children's choirs. Plus it's a great conference for your daycare workers and can be used for CEU credits. Cost includes interactive sessions from top-notch clinicians and breakout times to interact with choir workers just like you. J. W. Pepper music vendor will be available so you can purchase whatever you might need for your choir, and so much more.

**For more information, including cost, or to register, visit [alsbom.org/children-summit](http://alsbom.org/children-summit) or please contact Ministry Assistant Sharon Cleveland at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 279, or (334) 613-2279, [scleveland@alsbom.org](mailto:scleveland@alsbom.org).**



**JULY 9-13**  
[supersummer.ymlink.org](http://supersummer.ymlink.org)

Samford University,  
Birmingham

### Focuses on two major themes: **Leadership and Discipleship.**

Students who participate will be challenged to deepen their faith and stand out as the leader God wants them to be. The camp is open to any student in Alabama who has completed the 8th-12th grade and exemplifies solid spiritual leadership in his or her church.

For more information, including cost, or to register, visit [supersummer.ymlink.org](http://supersummer.ymlink.org) or contact Lauren House at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 262, or (334) 613-2262, or [lhouse@alsbom.org](mailto:lhouse@alsbom.org).

## 2018 MISSIONS ADVENTURE CAMP

### WorldSong's Missions Adventure Camp (MAC) is

an overnight camp that focuses on the adventure of living on mission with God. Nestled at the base of beautiful Bald Mountain, WorldSong offers campers time away from the distractions of everyday life where they can connect with God in the midst of His creation. MAC features Bible study, time with missionaries, adventure recreation including ropes courses and ziplines, canoeing, archery, outdoor cooking, arts and crafts, hiking, overnight tent-camping and so much more!

JUNE	18-22	MAC for Girls
	18-22	MAC for Teen Girls
	25-29	MAC for Girls
JULY	2-4	Family MAC - NEW
	5-7	Mini MAC for Girls and Boys
	5-7	Mini MAC for Teen Girls - NEW
	9-13	MAC for Girls and Boys
	16-20	MAC for Girls and Boys
	23-27	MAC for Boys - NEW
	23-27	MAC for Teen Boys - NEW
27-28	Lad & Dad - NEW	

**MAC is for girls and boys** completing grades K-12 (includes Alabama Baptist Boys Adventure Camp now with expanded options at WorldSong).

For more information or to register, visit [WorldSongRetreat.com](http://WorldSongRetreat.com) or call 1-800-264-1225, ext. 223, or (334) 613-2223.

When did you last have a foot-tapping, laughing, singing, good old time? Ready for another one?

That's what happens at Senior Adult Singin's! Come worship and rejoice in song. .

For more information including cost, please go online to [alsbom.org/senioradultsingin](http://alsbom.org/senioradultsingin) or contact State Missionary Eileen Mitchell at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 221, or (334) 613-2221, [emitchell@alsbom.org](mailto:emitchell@alsbom.org). Online registration opens June 1, 2018.

Tuesday, September 11,  
Northbrook Baptist Church,  
Cullman

# SENIOR ADULT SINGIN'

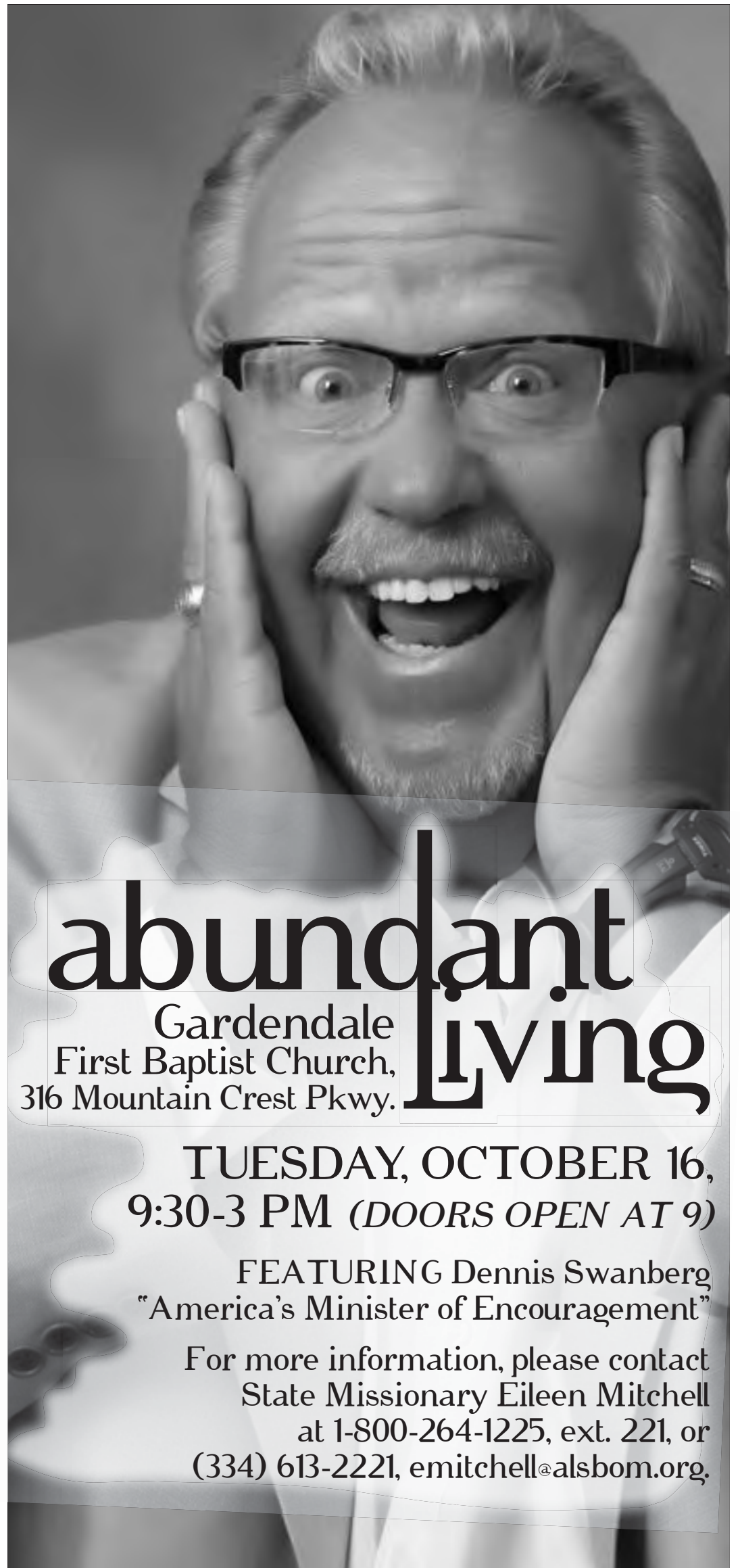
THE 61<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL RETREAT FOR ALL MEN AND BOYS  
ALABAMA BAPTIST DEACONS' RETREAT

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,  
AUGUST 10-11, SHOCCO SPRINGS

THEME: ADVANCING CHRIST'S  
KINGDOM THROUGH DEACONSHIP

FOR MORE  
INFORMATION, GO ONLINE TO  
[ALABAMADEACONSRETREAT.ORG](http://ALABAMADEACONSRETREAT.ORG).

FOR COST INFORMATION AND TO  
REGISTER, PLEASE CALL SHOCCO  
SPRINGS AT 1-800-280-1105.



# abundant Living

Gardendale  
First Baptist Church,  
316 Mountain Crest Pkwy.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16,  
9:30-3 PM (DOORS OPEN AT 9)

FEATURING Dennis Swanberg  
"America's Minister of Encouragement"

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

Reaching the top requires training, patience and endurance. It means taking the time to strengthen your skills so you'll be further along tomorrow than you were yesterday. It's knowing that each step you take gets you that much closer to THE SUMMIT.

Are you a leader in your church? Do you want to be a leader in your church? If your answer is yes, then you probably don't need to be told that all good leaders need training. So, where can a Sunday School director or teacher, a deacon or a discipleship director find training?

Every church member has some responsibility to lead in some way. Maybe you need to come discover where you may best be able to serve.

Learn about different areas of service and leadership. Hear others discuss some of the responsibilities and rewards of different areas of ministry.

Almost any church leader, including pastors and staff, can find training and encouragement to enhance their church ministry at The Summit for Church Leaders!

**ONLINE INFO:** [alsbom.org/summit](http://alsbom.org/summit)

To register, please call Shocco Springs at (256) 761-1100. For more information, please contact State Missionary Jamie Baldwin at 1-800-264-1225, ext. 240, or (334) 613-2240, [jbaldwin@alsbom.org](mailto:jbaldwin@alsbom.org).

The Summit for Church Leaders  
Friday and Saturday,  
August 3-4, 2018  
Shocco Springs



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# Cornelius Chapel, Faith Baptist see God revitalize their church

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

For years every time Joe Malone locked the doors of Cornelius Chapel Baptist Church, Buhl, he wondered if it would be much longer before he did that for the last time.

In 1980 the country church in Tuscaloosa Baptist Association had built its new building to accommodate a growing congregation. But in recent years it had dwindled to a handful of people — just Malone, several others and no pastor.

There were moments where he thought it might be time to leave, but he just couldn't.

"We struggled there for several years and just kept praying and hanging on," he said. "We thought that one day possibly the Lord would change things."

He had no idea that a few miles down the road, the answer to his prayers was waiting in a beauty salon — a group of about 30 meeting every Sunday for worship in the midst of hair dryers and curling irons. They called themselves Faith Baptist Church.

Geoff Elrod, Faith Baptist's pastor, said that salon was where their story of healing had begun. He and the others had come out of a painful church split situation, but over the months they began to see God bring something fresh, he said.

"One of the first Sundays we got together in the beauty shop in downtown Tuscaloosa, it was the sweetest spirit in worship that I've ever been a part of," Elrod said.

Before long, Faith Baptist moved into a local funeral home to meet, but they still desired a place of their own. It didn't seem likely — they had very little funding.

That's when they heard about Cornelius Chapel Baptist and how it was closing, and they thought God might just be up to some-



Photo courtesy of Linda Davis

Cornelius Chapel Baptist Church, Buhl, celebrates homecoming May 6. The church recently combined with Faith Baptist Church and kept Cornelius Chapel Baptist as the name.

thing. Cornelius Chapel had a paid-for building with unplayed instruments and an unused pulpit, and Faith Baptist had something it didn't — people.

"We had a preacher, musicians and a couple of deacons," said Linda Davis, a member of Faith Baptist.

Malone said they were an answer to every need the church had.

"I said, 'We don't have a pianist,' and they said, 'We've got one.' I said, 'We don't have a music director,' and they said, 'We've got one of those too,'" Malone said.

He told them the church needed some maintenance — like some electrical work done in the Sunday School rooms.

"They told me they had two electricians," Malone said. "Everything I said we needed, they had. The Lord really pulled things together."

He drew people as only He can to a spot in the country where none of the members lived, Malone said.

Davis said the first time they drove the 10 miles out to Cornelius Chapel Baptist to see the church, she and her husband said to each other, "Oh my goodness, this is the back side of nowhere."

But as they stood on the little front porch and watched the sun set over the rolling pasture, they knew this was exactly where they were supposed to be.

The newly combined congregation decided to keep Cornelius Chapel Baptist as the name in deference to its long history — the

church had been there since 1881. And then the merged church got to work letting the community of Buhl know they were back in business.

Cornelius Chapel Baptist may be a country church but what God is doing there "is kind of amazing," Davis said.

They've got young families driving from Northport. They have Davis' 91-year-old mother who's excited to attend church again. And on Friday nights they have around 60 people from the community coming in for movie nights at the church.

"It's a wonderful feeling," Davis said. "I've been in church all my life, but I've never had this type of feeling where every Sunday and Wednesday you look forward to going."

Elrod agreed that God is doing incredible things.

## 'Amazing journey'

"It's been an amazing journey," he said. "God is doing fantastic things to revitalize our church. He's working, and I'm without words."

He said the church is meeting a need right where it is, just being what it is.

"People still desire a loving country church and enjoy that fellowship," Elrod said. "We don't have to be a megachurch. I want to own who we are."

Malone said the whole situation has been a wonderful experience.

"We pray that the good work continues through the Lord's blessings," he said.✠

## Baptist NEWS BRIEFS

COMPILED FROM WIRE SERVICES

### LifeWay to provide free Bibles this summer

NASHVILLE — This summer thousands of Bibles will ring up for free at the registers of LifeWay Christian Stores in an effort to help local churches take the Word of God into their communities.

The initiative is called "Share the Word. Together." Churches of any denomination within 15 miles of a LifeWay store can sign up for a designated week in which each member of the church can visit the local LifeWay to pick up a free Christian Standard Bible. Church members will then give the Bibles away in their communities, start gospel conversations and spark invitations to weekend worship services or Bible study, said Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay.

Churches are encouraged to sign up for a week that overlaps with an existing event on their church calendar, such as Vacation Bible School, promotion Sunday or back-to-school kickoff events. Spanish Bibles also will be available for use on a limited basis for churches that designate "Spanish" in the denomination field when filling out the form.

Learn more about "Share the Word. Together" and sign up your church by visiting [sharethewordtogether.com](http://sharethewordtogether.com). (LifeWay)

To learn more about "Share the Word. Together" or to sign up your church, visit [sharethewordtogether.com](http://sharethewordtogether.com).

### GuideStone to reveal new health plan

DALLAS — A new health plan from GuideStone Financial Resources will be introduced during the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting and enrollment will begin July 1.

The GuideStone Secure Health plan will offer churches and pastors budget-minded health care coverage as well as protection for themselves, their employees and their families, GuideStone said in a news release. Eligible participants will have access to the nationwide Blue Cross Blue Shield network. Primary care visits and Teladoc consultations will be available at no out-of-pocket charge. Some care — such as out-of-network service — is not covered.

Additional information on Secure Health will be available at the SBC annual meeting in June and will be posted on GuideStone's website in mid-June at [guidestone.org/securehealthinfo](http://guidestone.org/securehealthinfo). (TAB)

## High Cholesterol? The creator of Gatorade® can help

Gainesville, FL — If you're one of the millions of Americans that have been diagnosed with high cholesterol, "Natural" help is now available from the creator of Gatorade®! The highly regarded late Dr. Robert J. Cade, while at the University of Florida, did extensive clinical trials utilizing a special formula he developed containing soluble fiber (Acaia Gum).

This formula, "CholesterAde," proved to lower cholesterol in the human blood by over 17% during an 8-week period. Not only is this special soluble fiber proven to lower cholesterol naturally, but other positive effects showed weight loss and improved bowel functions, which can help reduce the chances of many forms of cancer.

Dr. Richard Goldfarb, MD, FACS, the Medical Director for Go Epic Health, Inc. states "CholesterAde is a natural alternative to statins and other drugs that can create many types of health problems."

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**Dr. Robert Jeffress, Senior Pastor,**  
First Baptist Dallas

**O.S. Hawkins will preach in both morning worship services.**

First Baptist Dallas is located at 1707 San Jacinto Street,  
one mile from the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center.

# Ministry helps build relational equity among Ukrainian orphans

*(continued from page 1)*  
 commit suicide and 20 percent will end up in prison, she said. Some will join the Russian mafia. Six in 10 girls will be trafficked. “They feel hopeless,” Hendrix said. “Only 10 percent of those who leave the orphanage will live a productive life.”

## God loves each one

Tom Benz, founder of Bridges of Faith, said he started the organization with the desire to help Ukrainian orphans find their identity in Jesus — to know that God loves each one of them more than they could ever imagine.

“They’re not bad kids, but they do have wrong information about life,” Benz said, noting that they have never seen what a healthy

family looks like. “One of the things we are trying to do is give them better information.”

And if they can find families while they are in Alabama, that’s wonderful too, he said.

“Legally we can’t bring them here for the purpose of adoption, but about 60 to 75 percent of the children who come here for the hosting program do find forever families because people see the children and God lays that on their hearts,” Benz said. “It’s kind of phenomenal. When people see the children, hear them giggle and see them smile, it becomes personal. God is blessing this ministry.”

Another way Alabamians can interact with the kids and see their lives transformed is to volunteer to help at BridgeStone.

“We welcome work teams,” Benz said.

That includes people who can do construction from painting to light remodeling to helping build a new gym, he said. The needs at BridgeStone also include yard work, laundry and serving as a house parent.



Photo courtesy of Tom Benz  
 Kenneth Garner (right) left his pastorate to become the full-time director of operations for Bridges of Faith.

“And we would love for people to come do activities with the kids — softball, volleyball ... art class. Some people have even brought horses in the past for the kids to ride,” Benz said. “We would love anything that would help to build relational equity so that we are able to share Jesus.”

“I have hosted kids through Bridges of Faith since August 2014. I also serve with them in ministry — I am responsible for planning activities and finding host families for the kids to stay with overnight in Huntsville. This allows them to experience a loving Christian family of a mom and dad. We take the kids to the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, the indoor trampoline park and to Kohl’s for learning, fun and shopping for personal needs. When it’s warm, we go swimming. My sister ultimately adopted a young man brought to the U.S. through Bridges of Faith.

I’ve planned and executed many events over the years but setting up the hosting program is always one of the most fulfilling. It’s easy to set up, but the impact is so great for me, our volunteers and the kids. Without fail, there is always a child that I gravitate toward in each group that allows for greater conversation and interaction. It’s nice to see them open up when they realize you care and just want to spend time with them.

I look forward to hosting and setting up their excursions for years to come.”

**David Pinkleton**  
 Alabama Human Trafficking Task Force  
 Member of Whitesburg Baptist Church, Huntsville

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# ALABAMA

## UPDATES

PEOPLE, CHURCHES MAKING NEWS ACROSS THE STATE

### BCCF elects Rod Marshall as president

The leaders of Southern Baptists' 20 children's homes recently elected Rod Marshall, leader of Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries (ABCH), as their president.

Marshall, ABCH president and CEO, will represent the Baptist Coalition for Children and Families (BCCF) at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Dallas in June and "seek to build and strengthen relationships with Baptist leaders," he said.

He also will play a key role in the program agenda for BCCF's 71st annual meeting set for April 11-13, 2019, in New Orleans.

"The purpose of BCCF is to strengthen members and their respective organizations through leadership development, dynamic relationships, education and advocacy," Marshall said. "It is an exciting time to be involved in BCCF and it is an incredible privilege to serve my fellow



MARSHALL

Christian child-care leaders through this role."

Marshall said BCCF also is actively exploring ways to use technology to better reach its goals. One aspect of that would be holding quarterly virtual meetings to "facilitate conversations and exploration of best practices and creative responses to challenges," he said.

Since 1949, BCCF members have united for the purpose of serving children and families. In 2016 — the last year with completed official statistics — BCCF members positively impacted more than 2.6 million families.

For more information, visit [bccfamilies.org](http://bccfamilies.org). (Grace Thornton)

### Wilson marks 30 years at Alabama WMU

For 30 years Cindy Wilson has been a behind-the-scenes anchor for Alabama Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

"Cindy has often said, 'This is not a job but a ministry,' and that is how she approaches every aspect of her work, whether answering a question or preparing the financials," said Candace McIntosh, executive director of Alabama WMU. "It is all for the Kingdom in Cindy's heart and mind."

Since 1993, Wilson has served as assistant to Alabama WMU's executive director, serving McIntosh and Beverly Miller, the previous executive director. She served the five years before that as the office receptionist.



WILSON

"She is really the go-to person in our office," McIntosh said. "She has experienced every aspect of the work of Alabama WMU. She is a valuable resource and we are so grateful to have her."

McIntosh recently honored Wilson's three decades of service with a brick in her honor in National WMU's new Walk of Faith garden. The walk, built on New Hope Mountain in Birmingham, recognizes missions heroes past and present.

"She is consistent, hardworking and goes above and beyond in everything she does," McIntosh wrote about Wilson. "The mission and ministry of Alabama WMU is stronger and better because of her servant's heart." (Grace Thornton)

## TAB CLASSIFIEDS

For information on pricing or placing a classified ad, contact the advertising department of The Alabama Baptist at 205-870-4720, ext. 102, or [ads@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:ads@thealabamabaptist.org). Copy deadline is two weeks before publication.

### CHURCH POSITIONS

#### ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR WORSHIP & MUSIC

Concord Baptist Church, a vibrant and growing church in Anderson, S.C., is seeking an associate pastor for worship and music. This person must have the calling, gifting, training and heart to lead a large and diverse ministry of worship. We are excited about our future! For a job description and/or to submit a resumé/profile, please contact [jjames@concordbaptist.com](mailto:jjames@concordbaptist.com). Please also visit [concordbaptist.com](http://concordbaptist.com) for more information about our congregation.

#### FULL-TIME WORSHIP PASTOR

The worship pastor will be responsible for providing pastoral leadership to the worship ministry at Farmstead Baptist Church. The worship pastor will be responsible for assisting the church in planning, conducting and evaluating music and will lead a dynamic blended worship service during Sunday morning, Sunday night, Wednesday night and various other services. The worship pastor must be a self-starter, have strong organization skills, be able to conduct a choir and lead in congregational worship. The church currently averages approximately 325 in worship attendance. Please send resumé to: [belindaksmith@bellsouth.net](mailto:belindaksmith@bellsouth.net) or mail resumé to: Farmstead Baptist Church, 265

Curry Hwy, Jasper, AL 35503.

#### MUSIC MINISTER

Northside Baptist Church in Calera, Alabama, is seeking a bivocational minister of music. Please send resumé to: [nick@northsidecalera.org](mailto:nick@northsidecalera.org). For more information, call 205-410-6418.

#### YOUTH MINISTER

Babbie Baptist Church is seeking a full-time youth minister. The youth minister will oversee the communications/evangelism/discipleship training/events and activities of the youth ministry. For detailed job description, visit our website: [babbiebaptist.com](http://babbiebaptist.com). Interested persons must send a resumé with references and work experience to: Babbie Baptist Church, 19863 Babbie Rd., Andalusia, AL 36420, or email to: [babbiebaptist@centurylink.net](mailto:babbiebaptist@centurylink.net).

#### STUDENT MINISTER

Full-time student minister position available at First Baptist Church, Alexander City, AL 35010. Please send resumé to: [spsc@fbc-ac.org](mailto:spsc@fbc-ac.org).

#### YOUTH PASTOR

Raimund Heights Baptist Church in Bessemer is looking for a part-time youth pastor to work with a small group of young people. Send email with resumé to: [tnc4him.2@hotmail.com](mailto:tnc4him.2@hotmail.com).

#### MINISTER TO CHILDREN & FAMILIES

First Baptist Church in Huntsville

is seeking a full-time minister to children and families. More information is available at [fbchsv.org/employment](http://fbchsv.org/employment). Resumé and inquiries may be sent to: [search@fbchsv.org](mailto:search@fbchsv.org).

### OTHER POSITIONS

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

The Birmingham Baptist Association is a network of biblically faithful churches building one another up and working together to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment of Jesus Christ. The executive director of missions provides visionary leadership for the association staff, its ministries and its financial support. The executive director of missions should be an effective communicator of the gospel who is able to work with leaders from churches of various sizes and settings. The ability to represent the association among other city leaders is vital. Resumé can be submitted to: Greg Corbin, 2865 Old Rocky Ridge Rd., Birmingham, AL 35243, or [gcorbin@lakesidebaptist.com](mailto:gcorbin@lakesidebaptist.com).

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# TAB

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# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For June 10

## Explore the Bible By Douglas K. Wilson, Ph.D. Dean, Office for Global Engagement, University of Mobile

### CROWNED 2 Samuel 3:8–21

Last week we read that David had been crowned king over the tribe of Judah, but Saul's son Ish-bosheth ("man of shame") reigned over the other Israelite tribes.

The intervening passage described how the armies of Saul made war with David's army. Judah grew stronger and Saul's army lost momentum.

At the same time, Israel's commanding general Abner gained power as one of the survivors in Saul's family. This led to royal jealousy, false accusation and a new alliance.

#### A New Ally (8–11)

Abner had demonstrated faithfulness as a commander under Saul. When Ish-bosheth dishonored his cousin by accusing him of sexual misconduct, the general resigned his commission.

Abner reminded the king of his years of faithful service to the family and then warned Ish-bosheth that God was certain to accomplish His purposes. Abner called a curse upon himself if he did not accomplish God's directive.

Scripture provides few details regarding the king's spiritual condition or cultic practices. King Ish-bosheth (called Esh-Baal in 1 Chron. 9:39) had no reply to Abner's prophetic announcement.

Whether he walked with Yahweh, served Canaanite fertility gods Baal and Asherah in the high places or hedged his bets by offering sacrifices to both like others before and after him, Ish-bosheth offered no response to Abner's proclamation to align himself with the revealed Word of God. What could he say?

#### A Restored Relationship (12–16)

Then there was the other king. Abner and David had a history. The general first

met David as a youth when he had no idea who David was. After this bold young warrior with a faith to match defeated Goliath, Abner brought him to King Saul (1 Sam. 17:55–58).

Later David crept into Saul's camp, stole a spear and jug and then publicly rebuked Abner for not protecting the king (1 Sam. 26:9–16). David had shown himself a worthy adversary and Abner knew that God's hand was upon David.

When Abner committed his allegiance to David in this passage, David asked him for a pledge of good faith. Abner was to retrieve Saul's daughter Michal, who had been David's wife. Readers may recall that Saul gave her away to another man (1 Sam. 25:44). If he would bring Michal to David, the king would trust him.

Abner found success and Michal's brother Ish-bosheth allowed her to return to David.

#### A Consolidated Kingdom (17–21)

In order for the tribes of Israel to join forces Abner would have to convince them, especially the tribe of Benjamin, that Israel would fare better under David's leadership than under Ish-bosheth.

Once again Abner invoked the name of Yahweh as the reason why all of Israel should commit to David.

God honors leaders who are committed to His purposes.

Abner's commitment to honoring God earned David's respect. Though they had been adversaries David allowed him to depart in peace.

Upon hearing the news of Abner's death a short time later, David was heartbroken (2 Sam. 3:32–37).

Here is a lesson for us: When former foes hear the gospel, repent and trust Christ, we should rejoice that they have become members of our family.✠

## Bible Studies for Life By Kenneth B.E. Roxburgh, Ph.D. Chair and Armstrong Professor of Religion, Samford University

### WHY ARE WE IN THIS MESS? Genesis 3:1–7, 14–19

Although a variety of 21st century writers from different theological stables are quite willing to talk about salvation, little attention is given to the notion of sin. The end result is that our understanding of grace and salvation is distorted because we have lost an understanding of the depth and depravity of human sinfulness.

#### We sin when we fail to keep God's commands. (1–7)

The Genesis account of the sin of Adam and Eve reminds us that sin involves turning our backs on the generosity of God's love shown to His creation and determining that we can live on our own resources rather than trusting in God's providence.

Sin is characterized by human pride, choosing to live our own way and focusing on our own needs rather than the needs of others. Sin not only brought about a breakdown between God and humankind, but Adam and Eve began to blame each other and their relationship suffered.

In 1972 when I was 19 years of age, I wrote to F.F. Bruce, professor of biblical studies at Manchester University in England, and asked him about the origin of sin and whether we sin because we are sinners or whether we are sinners because we sin. His response was simple: "Isn't it a great sin to be a sinner at all?" This is the heart of the matter — each and every one of us choose on a regular basis to turn away from the generosity of God and His holy love to live according to our own aims and ambitions.

#### The serpent will ultimately be defeated. (14–15)

Despite the realistic depiction of sin which we find in Genesis 3, a note of hope is sounded. Many Christian interpreters

have seen in this promise the first of many predictions of the coming of Christ. We know that our Lord encountered many experiences of temptation which He vigorously and decisively rejected, living rather a life of obedience to the will of His Father. As Paul reflects on the death of Jesus, he tells the Church in Colossae that Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it (that is, the cross).

#### We experience the consequences of our sin. (16–19)

The Genesis story of sin's entry into God's created order indicates that disorder affects human relationships. Notions of patriarchy, of men and women striving with one another, ought not to be seen as God's original intention but as disorder and chaos, a consequence of sin, rather than the original intention of the Creator. Even work, originally given as a gift of God the Creator for human beings to find fulfillment, is now filled with frustration and weariness. Life itself is seen as temporary as death enters into the cycle of life, presenting human beings with concepts of fear, uncertainty and even dread.

The Christian understanding of human nature is starkly realistic. While affirming the good possibilities of human existence as created by God, the Bible takes with utter seriousness the profound disruption, disorder, alienation, brutality and oppression that characterizes the actual human condition. The image of God in which humans were created is obscured and distorted by sin.

Thankfully Paul in Romans 5 demonstrates that although the universality of sin is clearly evident for all to see, the grace of God has abounded to many. Human failure is never the final work on humanity — God's grace has triumphed over sin and offers hope for society.✠

## Christian Crossword

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



### Across

- Places of experiment.
- It hath consumed \_\_\_ of Moab. (Num. 21:28)
- Esau sold his birthright for \_\_\_.
- Solomon's grandson. (1 Chron. 3:10)
- Mother of Hezekiah. (2 Kings 18:12)
- These ought ye to \_\_\_ done. (Matt. 23:23)
- Woman's headwear.
- And she (Shuah) conceived again and bore a son, ... \_\_\_. (Gen. 38:4)
- There remained two in the camp ... one was \_\_\_. (Num. 11:26)
- Saul \_\_\_ his thousands, and David his 10 thousands. (1 Sam. 29:5)
- That escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall \_\_\_ slay. (1 Kings 19:17)
- Military leader. (abbr.)
- For ye tithe mint and \_\_\_ and ... herbs. (Luke 11:42)
- Between. (prefix)
- Nicodemus ... brought a

### Down

- And death and hell were cast into the \_\_\_ of fire. (Rev. 20:14)
- And the Lord had respect unto \_\_\_ and to
- He that endureth to the \_\_\_ shall be saved. (Matt. 10:22)
- Former V.P. Al \_\_\_.
- Smallest.
- And \_\_\_ orah a prophetess ... judged Israel. (Judg. 4:4)
- Ballet step. (French)
- Element.
- Egg \_\_\_ yong.
- Not with \_\_\_, as menpleasers. (Eph. 6:6)
- Repetitive learning.
- Not plural.
- One thing on a list.
- Telecommunications for the deaf. (abbr.)
- Optical device.
- Puts on clothing.
- Direction.
- Soul, take thine \_\_\_. (Luke 12:19)
- And death and hell were cast into the \_\_\_ of fire. (Rev. 20:14)
- And the Lord had respect unto \_\_\_ and to

- his offering. (Gen. 4:4)
- Their glory shall fly away like a \_\_\_. (Hos. 9:11)
- Sons of Obed-edom ... \_\_\_ the fourth. (1 Chron. 26:4)
- Belonging to Abraham.
- Firearm.
- Displaying.
- Sunbathe.
- Madame Peron.
- Cyst.
- Joshua sent men from Jericho to \_\_\_. (Josh. 7:2)
- Head. (abbr.)
- Now the sons of \_\_\_ were sons of Belial. (1 Sam. 2:12)
- Tribute to whom tribute is \_\_\_. (Rom. 13:7)
- No man shall \_\_\_ me. (2 Cor. 11:10)
- Greek goddess.
- Greek god of war.
- Young cow.
- "Just as I am without one \_\_\_."
- Turn over account. (abbr.)
- Whose \_\_\_ is destruction. (Phil. 3:19)
- Regards highly.
- The Lord of hosts shall

- \_\_\_ them. (Zech. 9:15)
- Plaything.
- Bjorn \_\_\_.
- Relaxes.
- Egg or droplet.
- A thousand shall fall at thy \_\_\_. (Ps. 91:7)
- Outer pelvic bones.
- Storage vessels.
- Gaelic.
- That he might \_\_\_ him out of their hands. (Gen. 37:22)
- Relating to the ear. (prefix)
- Give it unto him which hath \_\_\_ talents. (Matt. 25:28)



**WHAT ARE YOU READING?**



**Alabama Baptists share about what they are currently reading**

**JENNIFER DAVIS RASH**

*The Alabama Baptist*  
**“The White Shirt: Find Your Peaceful & Life-giving Career at Any Stage of Life”** by Michael Alan Tate

What a great resource to help us all learn more about ourselves and allow us the opportunity to pursue (or readjust to) a career that best matches who we really are. While the book and related online resources are good for anyone experiencing anything other than true peace and joy in their daily work, it is a must-read for soon-to-be or recent college grads.

*Tell us what you are reading, a quick summary of what it is about and your response to it so far. Email news@thealabamabaptist.org.*



# Media reviews

## Sight & Sound’s new show ‘JESUS’ exceeds expectations

By Michael Foust  
 Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The first time someone invited me to a Sight & Sound Bible-based theatrical production — which would have required flying across the country and taking time away from my regular life — I declined. Why would I do that? After all, my own town has plays and musicals.

But a few years later, when my travels found me near a Sight & Sound Theatre, I relented and took in a show. And I finally understand what the fuss was all about.

**‘Broadway meets Bible’**

With special effects, monstrous sets, live animals and a panoramic stage the width of a football field, a Sight & Sound production was unlike anything I had ever seen.

It’s so massive that it takes more than three years — from concept to opening night — to put one together. It’s also so elaborate that there are only two of them: one in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and the other in Branson, Missouri.

It’s “Broadway meets Bible,” and some families plan their entire vacation around a show.



Photo courtesy of Sight & Sound Lancaster

Nearly 1.5 million people each year watch a Sight & Sound musical.

The company’s latest production, “JESUS,” is Sight & Sound’s first full-length production about Christ’s life and is showing in Lancaster this year and Branson in 2019.

“JESUS” features cutting-edge technology and a bigger-than-ever set but also an emotion-laden story that will captivate audiences. It’s spectacular.

Writer Kristen Brewer had a tall task to trim the content of four Gospels down to a script that would fit within 2.5 hours and stay true to Scripture. To accomplish that she concentrated on individual stories of lives changed by Christ — the calling of Peter as a disciple, the challenge to Nicodemus’ legalistic beliefs, the forgiveness of Mary Magdalene, the healing of the blind man and the casting out of demons from the man named Legion.

Throughout the show we’re treated to sights and sounds we’ve never seen in a Sight & Sound show. “JESUS” is the

**“‘JESUS’ features cutting-edge technology and a bigger-than-ever set but also an emotion-laden story that will captivate audiences. It’s spectacular.”**

first production to feature the new 12-ton LED screen that’s 113 feet wide and nearly 30 feet tall. It serves as a colorful backdrop to nearly every scene but amazingly never distracts from the story. I actually forgot it was there. The production also includes the largest moving set piece in Sight & Sound history

— a re-created Galilean hillside that’s 100 feet wide and 15 feet deep. We get to see Jesus and Peter walking on water too.

It’s the best way to experience the Bible without a DeLorean and flux capacitor.

Of course we also get to enjoy powerful music, special effects and live animals. (By my count, five types of animals — doves, horses, camels, goats and sheep — flew over the audience or walked down the aisle.)

At one point I wrote in my notes: “It’s tough to determine what is the most impressive scene.”

“JESUS” ends with the story of Jesus’ death, resurrection and ascension and of Peter’s preaching the gospel.

**Powerful show**

The show is powerful — I cried three times, if you’re curious — and left me wanting more. It does take a few liberties with the dialogue but no more than we saw in “The Bible” TV miniseries.

“JESUS” will run through Jan. 5, 2019, in Lancaster and then move to Branson.

And if you go, you’ll understand what the fuss is all about.

**Meet the reviewer**

*Michael Foust covers the intersection of faith and entertainment as a writer and podcast host for Heirloom Audio. He also is the husband of an amazing wife and the father of four small children.*



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Wikimedia Commons photo by Keith Allison

All-star point guard Stephen Curry (left) of the Golden State Warriors has a habit of writing Bible verses on his shoes. The grooves on the bottom use Morse code to reference Romans 8:28.

# ‘I can do all things’

## Bible helps NBA’s Curry stay ‘focused, locked-in’

Stephen “Steph” Curry has been writing Philippians 4:13 on his basketball shoes since his first college practice, but it was another passage from the Bible that may have helped him and his Golden State teammates reach the NBA Finals.

At halftime of Game 7 in the Western Conference finals, the Warriors looked out of sorts on the road at Houston. The Rockets had a double-digit lead and Curry appeared to be struggling, along with the rest of his team. The all-star point guard had only 8 points on 3-of-10 shooting in the first half. He needed something to help him regain his focus.

So, according to Marcus Thompson in *The Athletic*, during halftime Curry pulled out his Bible app on his phone and read another familiar passage from Philippians 4:6-7: “Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

### Second half

In the second half Curry and the Warriors heated up. In the third quarter Golden State outscored Houston 33-15, with Curry going 5-of-6 from the field and 4-of-5 from 3-point range.

He finished with 27 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds, four steals and one block. He also had

seven 3-pointers, which has been done only once before in a Game 7 — by Curry in 2016.

He has made a habit of playing exceptionally well in the third quarter and second half this post-season.

“It’s been great to come out of the locker room kind of focused, locked in, made some shots, get some stops and just have fun,” Curry told ESPN. “Obviously, thankfully tonight with the way the first half went, it was like clockwork, so it was good.”

### Favorite Bible verse

The habit of writing Bible verses on his shoes started Curry’s freshman year at Davidson College in North Carolina. His mom texted him her favorite verse, Romans 8:28, before his first practice and challenged him to find a verse for himself.

He chose Philippians 4:13: “I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

The verse has become so synonymous with Curry and his shoes that the star had Under Armour print the phrase “I can do all things” on his trademark shoe.

He has even worked in some more subtle faith references on his shoes. The grooves on the bottom use Morse code to reference Romans 8:28.

The NBA Finals began May 31 between the Warriors and the Cleveland Cavaliers. (BP)

**“Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”**

Philippians 4:6



## Arson, bomb attacks target churches in Nepal

SILGADHI, Nepal — Christians in Nepal are alarmed after a series of arson and bomb attacks on four church buildings in multiple regions of the nation.

The Hebron Church building in the eastern hilly region was set on fire May 9, Emmanuel Church’s building in western Nepal’s Doti District was burned May 10 and the Kanchanpur Emmanuel Church building in the midwest hilly region was set ablaze May 11. Before midnight May 12 the Mahima Church building in Dhangadhi, in western Nepal, was bombed.

Police have attributed the attacks to the Nepal Communist Party, known as the Biplab Group. Christian leaders in Nepal suspect a coordinated campaign by Hindu extremists.

Recently a social media movement has arisen against Christians on Facebook and Twitter with such hashtags as “Hindu Awakening against Conversion,” openly threatening pastors and churches. (MS)

## Worship services halted on Zanzibar Island

NAIROBI, Kenya — Pastor Daniel Kwileba Kwiyea was ordered to stop the church service he was leading on Tanzania’s semi-autonomous Zanzibar Island in May after a plainclothes police officer and local officials arrived.

Kwiyea and his daughter were taken into custody, a church member said. No charges were made against the pastor and his daughter and they were released later that day.

The incident followed an order to close the church after Muslim sheikhs from a nearby mosque complained that services on Sundays and weeknights were too loud — though the congregation does not use loudspeakers like the neighboring mosque.

In March another church in Zanzibar closed when police destroyed their meeting place, and in January a church was bulldozed to make way for a state university. (MS)

## Pastor imprisoned for possessing Bibles

TIARET, Algeria — A case that began with police in Algeria stopping a Christian suspected of carrying Bibles in his car ended May 16 with a large fine for the church leader.

A judge denied Pastor Nouredine Belabed’s appeal of a ruling demanding he pay a \$868 fine and court fees under a controversial law that forbids “undermining the faith of a Muslim.” Belabed received the sentence March 8, including a three-month suspended prison term reduced from what had been a two-year prison term.

The 37-year-old father of three was stopped by police March 14, 2015, and detained for possessing Bibles, a Bible commentary, a book on church history and some pamphlets. Christian leaders say the charge is unconstitutional, citing the Algerian constitution’s Article 42, which guarantees freedom of belief, opinion and worship. (MS)

## North Korean labor camps imprison thousands

PYONGYANG, North Korea — An estimated 80,000–120,000 political prisoners are being held in labor camps in North Korea, according to the U.S. State Department’s most recent International Religious Freedom Report. Many of those are being held for religious reasons.

“The government continued to deal harshly with those who engaged in almost any religious practices through executions, torture, beatings and arrests,” the report states.

A survey by the South Korea-based Database Center for North Korean Human Rights found that 99.6 percent of refugees said there was no religious freedom in the country.

The 2017 International Religious Freedom report is a congressionally mandated annual report describing the status of religious freedom in every country. (TAB)