



The Alabama Baptist

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Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

INSIDE



Associations are 'front-line support' for missions
◆ Pages 6-7



Faith & Family — Connecting with kids during the summer
◆ Page 10



SBC sees increase in giving, decline in baptisms
◆ Page 11

To watch the videos from this week's issue, visit our YouTube channel "TAB Media."



Photo by J.C. Smith

Boones Chapel Baptist Church, Prattville, hosts its second Truck Fest on May 15. The event drew more than 1,200 guests and five decisions for Christ were made during the event. Next year's Truck Fest is scheduled for May 13.

'Dreaming big'

Boones Chapel Baptist hosts food truck festival, sees salvations

By Lanell Downs Smith
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

When Brad Neave of Boones Chapel Baptist Church, Prattville, approached senior pastor Phil Winningham with the idea of hosting a food truck festival, church leaders weren't certain the idea would work in their rural community.

"My first thought was, that might work in the big city of Atlanta but not in the rural community of Boones Chapel," Winningham said. "However, when you challenge the church to dream big and think out of the box it's hard to shoot down an idea without giving it a try."

Boones Chapel introduced its first Truck Fest in 2018 and Winningham said they have been "blown away ever since."

The goal of the event held on the Boones Chapel campus was to draw people to the church and create opportunities for gospel conversations.

"Most have heard about Boones Chapel but events like

this connect what they have heard with the reality of who we are," Winningham said, noting that church members are encouraged to personally engage in evangelism.

Event planning began with prayer and promotion on social media, local advertising and word of mouth through church members.

"At all of our events members are encouraged to have the personal touch and to make connections whenever the op-

portunity arises," said Amy Fray, Boones Chapel ministry assistant. "We make sure our members keep that evangelistic focus."

This year's event held May 15 drew approximately 1,300 guests. In addition to the dozen or so food trucks, visitors enjoyed a festival atmosphere with

a bouncy house, face painting and games like corn hole and horseshoes.

(See 'Boones Chapel,' page 8)



Chubbathers

Chubbathers Facebook photo

Exclusive issue of *TAB* produced for SBC annual meeting; special thanks to sponsors

It's crunch time as Baptist leaders and entities finalize projects and plans for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting being held June 11–12 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC).

The Alabama Baptist (*TAB*) also has been working on a special project for the annual meeting — an exclusive edition to be handed out to those participating in the meeting.

The 32-page, full-color paper will feature schedules for the annual meeting and Pastors Conference, information about activities such as WMU events, a map of the SBC exhibit hall, information on the annual meeting app and tips on places to eat and visit while in Birmingham.

The special issue also will feature some of *TAB*'s award-winning articles.

"We are excited to not only provide a helpful resource to Southern Baptists attending the annual meeting but also showcase the great work done by our *TAB* team," said editor-in-chief Jennifer Davis Rash.

Opportunity to connect

Special thanks to the organizations and ministries that purchased ads and made this special issue of *TAB* possible. Advertisers include:

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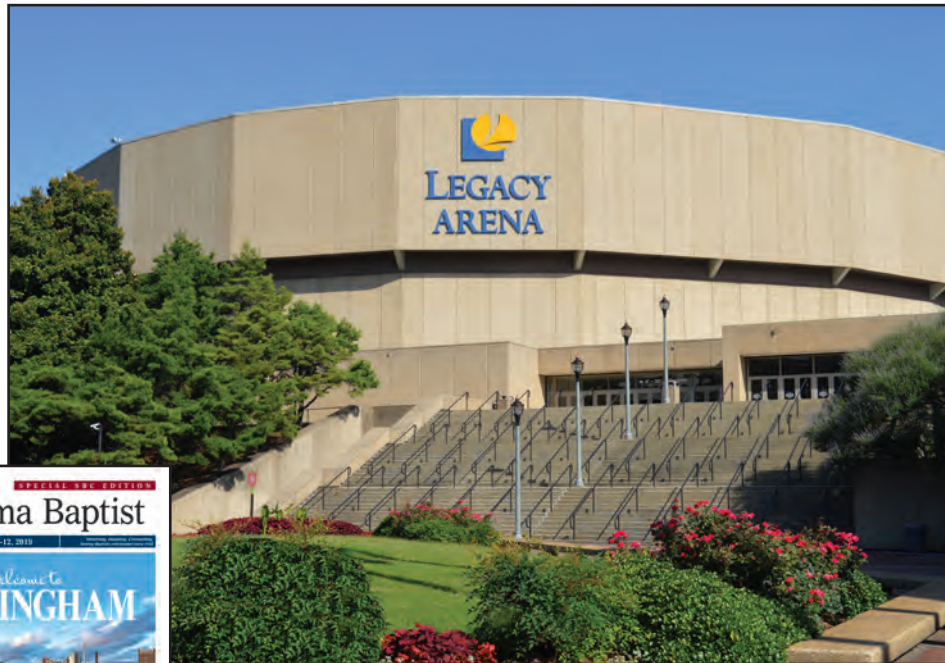


Photo courtesy of Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex
In just a few days thousands will gather at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC) for the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.



TAB graphic

An exclusive edition of *TAB* has been produced for the 2019 SBC annual meeting.

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- ▶ Radio personality Bob McClure

"The *TAB* advertising sales team would like to thank all those who participated in this special SBC issue," said director of sales Bill Gilmore. "We are honored to have the opportunity to connect ministries and businesses with our audience. We hope everyone's participation is a blessing to the organizations and readers alike." (*TAB*)



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"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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MY RASHIONALE

By **Jennifer Davis Rash**
President and Editor-in-Chief

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@RashionalThts



Consider life guard training to keep children safer in church

Something in my spirit warned me the minute he walked in the church. I'm not sure my 12-year-old mind truly understood but I knew to stay on guard.

My memory recalls the visiting youth evangelist as being in his mid-30s with creepy eyes. I don't remember any other details except that our youth group took him out to eat after the service. Pizza Hut, I think.

Somehow he ended up sitting next to me and throughout the meal he edged closer and closer until the already uncomfortable feeling turned to an SOS, red alert warning signal.

I didn't understand nor did I feel empowered to say anything so I determined to survive by leaning the opposite direction and continually scooting over to keep a few inches between us.

That was roughly 35 years ago. He didn't actually abuse me nor hurt me in any way, but I can still sense the shivers down my spine by his singling me out and being overly interested.

Were his intentions inappropriate or was he merely socially awkward and unaware of how he was making me feel? We'll never know but no child should ever feel threatened — especially at church.

Obviously far more true servants of the Lord are working in churches than those who lose their way or come in purposefully as predators.

But the predators do find their way inside from time to time and Southern Baptists have determined enough is enough.

Alabama Baptist leaders provided a "Helping Churches to Be Safer Places" resource to church leaders in mid-May. And Southern Baptist Convention President J.D. Greear's sexual abuse advisory group will report to SBC messengers June 12 in Birmingham.

The advisory group also is working with the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission to provide resources in the SBC exhibit hall and a June 10 panel discussion on the topic.

Ronnie Floyd, newly elected president of the SBC Executive Committee, said in a Baptist

Press article that he is focusing a lot of time and energy on how the issue will be addressed.

The response, he said, needs to be delivered in the most "Christ-honoring way to build the safest environment we can in our churches and stand boldly and courageously against all sexual abuse. We need to leave Birmingham with there being no debate about where we are, where there are definitive actions that everybody knows."

Floyd is correct to be thinking carefully on the subject. While I have to believe everyone — except maybe the perpetrators

— wants a solution, we do have to work within an autonomous polity structure for the answer.

Still there has to be a simple and manageable way to guard the children in our churches.

In fact, training a set of children's workers to function like life guards might be an option. Life guards are stationed at strategic points so no individual is ever out of sight. And the roaming guard continuously walks the perimeter keeping check on the guards on duty as well as serving as an additional set of eyes overall. It would take extra effort but it could work. 🌈

RASHIONAL THOUGHTS

Teachers are molding the minds, lives of our children as much as anyone; Shouldn't we want them at their best?

Baptists attending the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in Birmingham on June 11 will have the opportunity to thank a teacher.

Messengers and guests who attend the Tuesday morning meeting will be given a card and SBC President J.D. Greear plans to encourage everyone present to write a note of thanks.

The thank-you notes are for teachers in the Birmingham City Schools to know Southern Baptists appreciate how they are investing in children.

Ushers will collect the cards by the end of session and they will be distributed throughout the Birmingham city school system at a later date.

If everyone present fills out a

card there should be thousands of cards saturating the schools.

Granted the messages will be from strangers but words of encouragement are always a positive, especially for teachers who are experiencing burnout and exhaustion.

When burnout hits

Think about the school teachers who made a difference in your life.

Also think about those who had lost their joy for teaching by the time you were in their class. How many opportunities to change the life of a child for the good did they miss? Did their lack of energy and enthusiasm for the role end up holding students back in life at some point down the road?

I've known several people who truly wanted to make a career out of teaching. They love kids, enjoy

teaching and embrace the milestones that come with watching a child learn and grow.

But the overwhelming administrative requirements, overcrowded classrooms and the volume of difficult life issues impacting so many around them finally beat them down.

While the school boards and governmental leaders debate the structural and financial details of how to improve schools and teachers' salaries, church groups and community members can continue helping in small ways such as sending notes, volunteering and donating.

After all teachers are molding the minds and lives of our children as much as anyone.

Shouldn't we want teachers at their best? 🌈

Your Voice



Share your comments, letters to the editor, blog excerpts, social media posts

Transformed to thrive: importance of discipleship

By **Tom Fillinger**
CEO, IgniteUS, Inc.

The purpose of the church, every church, is to “make disciples.” To accomplish this, there must be a clear and well-formulated definition — what is a disciple?

Second, there must be an intentional strategy to make disciples. Parking your car in a stable will not cause it to suddenly turn into a horse. Going to church will not suddenly cause people to become obedient disciples of Jesus Christ.

Third, there must be an objective process to determine growth and maturity in Christ (2 Pet. 3:18).

There must be a sense of urgency to accomplish the changes necessary to not merely survive but thrive.

Three issues constitute critical

action for the pastor and those in leadership:

1. This is a process not an event.
2. Those who oppose any changes in the church (an estimated 47% of the people in any given congregation) must be overcome if systematic, measurable positive transformation is going to take place.
3. Declining churches need the counsel and mentoring of an experienced “change agent” to guide them through these turbulent waters. Unfortunately, most churches wait until after they have passed the point of no return to attempt correction.

After Moses sent the 12 spies into the Promised Land, Joshua and Caleb urged the nation to enter the Promised Land. The other 10 pseudo-leaders led a rebellion, seeking to stone Moses. In Numbers

14:39–45, the rebellious engage in pseudo-repentance, motivated by self-preservation rather than a desire to honor God who had rescued them from bondage in Egypt.

After they lost all semblance of effectiveness, lost many of their people and lost the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, then and only then did they attempt recovery.

God brought a plague upon those so-called leaders for their willful disobedience to His clear direction. He does not take lightly the disobedience of leaders. Reflect on where you are. You may indeed have time to act. Do it now!

The Bad News — this process is emotionally, mentally and spiritually exhausting. Weigh this carefully before saying “We Will!”

The Good News — There is hope. When you are fully committed to see positive change take place in the church you pastor, change is possible. You must be willing to pay the price required. When you are convinced God has placed you where you are, act. You must win the lost, build up the saints and multiply leaders who make disciples who make disciples. Pray and engage!

EDITOR’S NOTE — IgniteUS is a nonprofit organization based in Cullman whose mission is to provide leadership development and intentional disciple making in local churches. For more information, go to www.igniteus.net or call 800-472-3764.

Our intention is to offer encouragement to associations, state conventions and churches to diligently guard those whom God has given to us for the purpose of ministry.

**Excerpt from statement on sexual abuse prevention, Southern Baptist Conference of Association-
al Leaders (SBCAL)**

A leader is a person God has assigned to make a place better. Every person has the opportunity to make a place better.

Richard Blackaby
Author, Bible teacher
and leadership coach

To be able to tell your story is a way to become known and thus become less lonely and connect with the spirit inside of us.

Jim Rawlings
Retired chaplain, former
head of Duke University
Hospital’s pastoral services

Southern Baptists are known for working through disaster to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Don Williams
Director, Oklahoma
Baptist Disaster Relief

Letters to the Editor

I want to thank you for the editorials you are writing, especially the editorial in the Jan. 31, 2019, issue about fasting from 24-hour cable news networks.

I had to ban myself from the “talking heads” several months ago because they would make me so angry.

I decided to pray for them instead and I now get all my news from our local paper and the local nightly news.

God has given me such a peace

as I spend more time in His word and in prayer.

You are correct in that the only way we are going to make a difference in our world is by reading His word, praying and letting His light shine as we go.

I am 77 and a longtime reader of *The Alabama Baptist*. I appreciate the changes you are making.

Thank you and keep up the good work.

Pat Parker Kines
Dothan, Ala.

Share online or email news@thealabamabaptist.org

“The Christian faith is belief, trust and obedience. It is not multiple choice.”

GARY FENTON

Senior advancement officer, Samford University

When we see issues as problems, we only recognize the negative effects on the surrounding people and environment. On the other hand, when we recognize issues as opportunities, we accentuate the positive, which drives us to seek resolutions.

George Yates
Church health strategist
Alabama Baptist State Board
of Missions

For much of the '80s and '90s, Southern Baptist kids were pretty likely to grow up to become Southern Baptist adults: Seven in 10 maintained their SBC identity into adulthood in surveys conducted between 1984 and 1994. That has declined precipitously. In the most recent surveys conducted between

2015 and 2018, just over half of those raised Southern Baptist were still with the SBC. In other words, nearly half of Southern Baptist kids leave and never come back.

“Only Half of Kids Raised Southern Baptist Stay Southern Baptist” by Ryan P. Burge
ChristianityToday.com

In the early church, stories of martyrs were told to encourage Christians to remain steadfast, even in the face of persecution, even if they were called upon to give their lives for Christ. These stories tell of how those persons testified to Christ not only in life but also in death and they serve to strengthen Christians by providing examples of faithfulness grounded in the hope

of a future resurrection and eternal life with Christ.

Col. John D. Laing
U.S. Army Reserves, Senior chaplain, Texas Military Dept.
Southwestern Seminary
professor of systematic theology, philosophy and chaplaincy

We have new opportunities to share Christ with people who have never heard the gospel, and we have opportunities to develop real relationships, share Christ and reach the nations in the U.S. The Great Commission is not an option clause; it is a command from our Lord.

John Barnett
Missions strategist
Kentucky Baptist Convention

From the *Twitterverse*

@ricklance

I am grateful for all those participating in Crossover Birmingham prior to the SBC. Sammy Gilbreath has been point person in this outreach endeavor but many others have devoted themselves to the cause. <http://crossoverbhm.org>

@EC_SBC

“We need to become known for being the most multigenerational, multiethnic, multilingual denomination in the United States that is advancing the gospel of Christ, planting gospel churches, advancing the gospel to the ends of the earth.” — @ronniefloyd #SBC19

@jaredcwilson

I've been hurt by church people more than by anybody else. And yet solo discipleship is not a biblical option. I'll give up on the local

church when Jesus does and not a second sooner.

@TozerAW

“The music must not turn the church into an audience enjoying the music but into a congregation singing the Lord's praises in His presence.” John Calvin #worship

@AleahMarsden

Contemplating: What if when I daily pray, “Your kingdom come,” I actually expected to see it in the present tense? Not just in the sense of Christ's return but in the here-and-now reality of his kingdom?

@clbolt

Three questions to ask of any sermon:

1. Is this sermon mere opinion or is it from the Bible?
2. Is this sermon focused on good

things or is it centered on Christ?

3. Is this sermon about what I can do or about what Christ has done for me?

@SBCexplainer

The truth is, the fighters are going to fight. ... We're all best off if we just let them rage and move on. But we have to move on. It's up to us. Will we give them a voice by continuing to squabble with them? Or will we rise above it to fulfill our mission and reform what is needed (like sexual abuse accountability)? The buck stops with us.

@IMB_SBC

Here are five ways to teach kids about missions:

1. Start with yourself.
2. Start small.
3. Pray.
4. Do something creative.
5. Bring them along.



Photo courtesy of ABCH

Rod Marshall serves as president and CEO of the Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries.

Blazing new trails at SBC

Your Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries will be blazing new trails very soon.

We have never before had an exhibit at the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting. But with the SBC coming to Birmingham we decided this would be a great year to have a presence in the exhibitor's hall. Several friends are coming by for some delightful conversation. I hope you can join us.

Jedd Medefind, president of the Christian Alliance for Orphans, will be my guest all day Monday and Tuesday at our booth. Please come by and introduce yourself. Jedd and I will be interviewing friends of our ministry about the many opportunities for Southern Baptists to engage in orphan care and foster care — Kevin and Pat Smith, J.D. Greear, Todd Unzicker, Kevin and Lynette Ezell, Danny and Charlotte Akin, David and Tera Melber, Paul and Michelle Chitwood, David and Heather Platt and Sandy Wisdom-Martin.

Each of these interviews will be made into videos but I hope you will come by our booth and listen in person.

For a full schedule of the interviews, visit our website, www.alabamachild.org/sbc19.

—Rod Marshall

'Front-line support'

Associations support churches in missions efforts, provide vital local partnership

By Lanell Downs Smith
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

As Southern Baptist churches strive to fulfill the Great Commission, associations as diverse as the regions that define their boundaries provide the support needed to increase their Kingdom impact.

"Associations should assist their churches in their mission to reach their community for Christ and in fulfilling their Great Commission responsibility," said Rick Barnhart, director of the office of associational missions and church planting for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions (SBOM). "They are the front-line support and missional structure present to assist the churches in cooperating together."

Support and resources

Associations serve churches in various ways with associational staff providing support, resources and training whenever needed. Associational mission strategists (AMS) — also known as associational missionaries or directors of missions — uplift pastors and meet with them regularly to provide encouragement. Programs and projects round out this vital partnership.

Most associations hold annual meetings in the fall to report on association business, hear from



Photo courtesy of Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations
A missions team from Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations distributes Spanish Bibles at the Texas-Mexico border. This is just one of the ministries resulting from the joint leadership between the two associations.

SBOM and convention entity representatives and enjoy worship together. Some meet more often.

For example Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association conducts quarterly meetings sponsored by the association's Woman's Missionary

Union leadership team and offers a missions-focused message, reports on associational missions and food and fellowship for those in attendance.

Some associations work together to further increase their ability to reach their neighbors. That's the case with the 38 churches in the Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations which share an AMS, Steve Dunn.

"Churches in an association are geographically close and simultaneously called to the Great Commission," Dunn said. "The mission calls us to cooperate for greater

effectiveness. The sharing of gifts, resources and opportunities among the churches helps the churches when a need arises to have a built-in channel for help."

'More the merrier'

Charles Autery, pastor of Christian Way Baptist Church, Camden, in Pine Barren Association, said the old saying "the more the merrier" applies when it comes to associations.

"The more help we have the more we can make an impact in our community," he said. "The association reaches out to us and helps to support our ministries."

"Associations should assist their churches in their mission to reach their community for Christ and in fulfilling their Great Commission responsibility."

Rick Barnhart

**director of the office of associational missions and church planting
Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions**



Photo courtesy of Madison Baptist Association

Children learn Scripture while at Camp MACOBA where they also get the opportunity to hike, play volleyball, practice archery and much more. The camp is run by Madison Baptist Association. For more information visit campmacoba.org.

The associations have combined to host men's and women's ministry events, a college student ministry, weekly pastors luncheons, a recovery program, prison/jail ministries, an Oklahoma missions partnership, a recovery program, Spanish-language Bible distribution and missions projects like roofing the local Christian school.

'Advancing the Kingdom'

Projects like these are not headed by the association but rather are sponsored by a church and the association helps to facilitate the cooperation of sister churches, Autery said.

Terrell Boyd, pastor of Lakewood Baptist Church, Huntsville, in Madison Baptist Association, noted how important associations are to both large and small churches but especially to smaller congregations.

"Together we are able to make a larger impact than we can by ourselves," he said.

"The goal of our association is to assist churches in fulfilling their mission and provide them opportunities for fellowship and to work together in advancing the kingdom of God," said Charlie Howell, executive director of missions for Madison Association.

Cooperative projects within the association include prayer conferences, evangelism training and events, disaster relief, a missions partnership with Sibiu Baptist Association in Romania, Camp MACOBA and a youth summer service and worship week known as Rock-et City Missions.

Madison Association also supports a prayer and evangelism team, a church revitalization ministry team and a new works team involved with church planting.

"Church planting is a difficult undertaking with no guarantee for success," Howell said. "These men need our prayers and support as they lead their new churches to fulfill the Great Commission. We work in conjunction with SBOM in this area of ministry to assure that our church planters get full training and support as they start new churches in the Huntsville area."

The SBOM office of associational missions works with associations to provide resources, financial assistance, guidelines, training, men-



Photo courtesy of Alabama WMU

Alabama-Crenshaw Baptist Association collected 430 backpacks as part of Alabama WMU's work with the Mississippi River Ministry in Kentucky. Groups across Alabama collected more than 9,400 backpacks for the ministry.

toring, personal development and conferences throughout the year, Barnhart said.

"Our office assists the associations in training and follow-through with church and community min-

istries, hunger ministries, multicultural needs, deaf ministries and architectural issues," he said. "We work with associations in partnering with other offices throughout the SBOM missionary family."✠

Associational Missions Emphasis Week moved from May to October, name changed

Some big changes related to Baptist associations happened at the SBC annual meeting in June 2018. Messengers accepted a recommendation from national Woman's Missionary Union and the Southern Baptist Convention Associational Leaders (SBCAL) to move the Associational Missions Emphasis Week from May to October and change the name to Week of Prayer for Baptist Associations.

Members of SBCAL also voted to adopt a new title, associational mission strategist.

The new name for the week of prayer clarifies the focus of the week as a time for churches to remember and pray for the vital support role associations play in each church's ministry. The change also aligns the name with other focus weeks in Southern Baptist life, according to the recommendation.

Week of prayer

This year's Sunday to Sunday week of prayer will be Oct. 20–27. The new dates will coincide with many associational meetings taking place during October and will

enable associations to more effectively promote the focus without the need to schedule around Mother's Day, Memorial Day and graduations.

Because some associations may hold their week of prayer at a different time, undated promotional materials also are available. The office of associational missions at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions is available to assist in producing promotional materials. For information, call 800-264-1225. (Lanell Downs Smith)

Boones Chapel engages community with creative evangelistic effort

(continued from page 1)

Food vendors attend by invitation only, ensuring a variety of food options. Neave manages the event, inviting food vendors and communicating with them from the start of planning through the event's end.

While the event provided a festival atmosphere it also offered a setting that encouraged one-on-one gospel conversations, Winningham said.

"Having a meal with someone offers a prime opportunity to share whereas a fall festival, moving from one game to the other, makes it nearly impossible for this personal conversation," Winningham said.

In line with the church's three-fold evangelism strategy the festival offered a live praise band, gospel conversations and a Serving Our Savior (SOS) ministry booth.

SOS Ministries for Evangelism and Discipleship is a national events-based ministry focusing on evangelism.

The SOS booth is a ministry tool designed to create opportunities to engage festival guests in gospel conversations.

Festival guests are asked the question, "Have you seen three things God cannot do?" A creative display board allows volunteers to lead guests toward the answers to that question.

"We ask the guests standing there if they are 100% sure they are go-

ing to heaven when they die," said SOS team leader Patty Mills.

"Then we ask if they would like to be 100% certain. A lot of times they say yes and that's when we take them back to trained individuals who will share the gospel."

The SOS team then uses the Bible to walk them toward salvation.

Decisions for Christ

"I love seeing so many people from all over our community come to our campus," Fray said. "Everyone was smiling and having a good time and enjoying the good food, beautiful weather and the music and games. Seeing our church

family engage with our community with the main purpose of sharing Christ has always been an encouragement to me."

Five decisions for Christ were made at the festival this year and the

church continues to reap from the seeds sown at the event.

"I hear many of the stories that our church members share after an event like this and I know those encounters for Christ will bear much fruit," Fray added.

"I even heard that one of the food truck vendors expressed an interest in coming back for a worship service because the atmosphere was so loving and inviting."

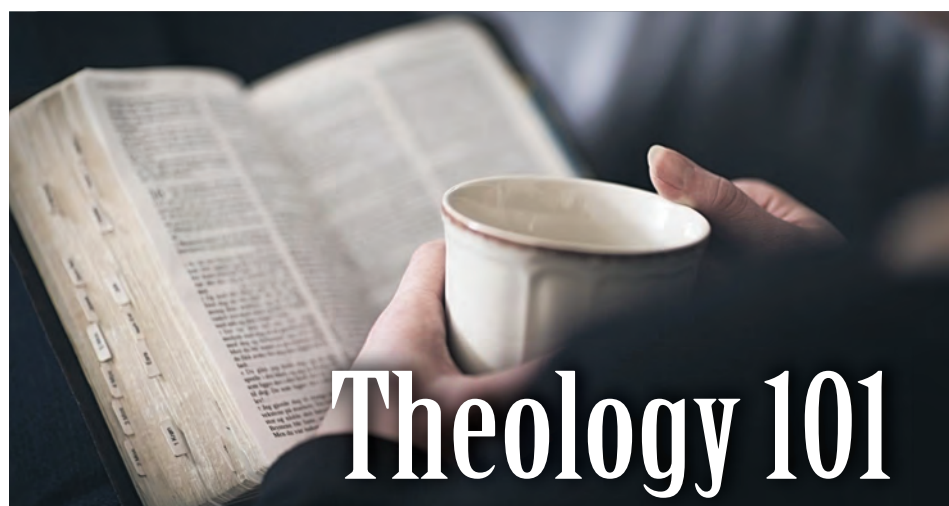
Boones Chapel members hope to expand the event in all areas as attendance grows. 🌿

The 2020 Truck Fest is scheduled for May 13.



Photo by J.C. Smith

Community children enjoy the various games available at the Truck Fest held May 15 at Boones Chapel Baptist Church, Prattville. 'Everyone was smiling ... and enjoying the good food [and] beautiful weather,' said ministry assistant Amy Fray.



Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

Fatherhood of God

The God and Father of Jesus Christ

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

Since June is the month in which Father's Day falls it is a timely month to think about the Fatherhood of God. When we read of God's self-revelation to persons in the Old Testament we encounter such Hebrew names for God as Elohim and Jehovah (Yahweh), names that introduce God to humankind as the eternal self-existent Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

For English readers of the Old Testament such names for God are frequently rendered simply as "the Lord God."

God's introduction to Moses and through him to His chosen nation Israel was simply "I am that I am" or simply "I am" (Ex. 3:14). While these various names served to distinguish the true and living God from the imaginary gods of the nations, these terms tend to come across with an elevated, exalted or distant connotation.

'My Father in heaven'

Nonetheless the goal was for Israel to understand God as distinct from pagan notions of "so-called gods" or "gods many and lords many" (1 Cor. 8:5).

When we open the New Testament the most common name for God is that of Father. This was the way Jesus most often spoke of God. This way of thinking about God is familiar, close and intimate. Even though the Old Testament evidences some foregleam of God as Father — as when Isaiah voiced a prayer that said, "Doubtless You are our Father" (63:16)

— it remained for Jesus to attach the title Father to God.

He did this on numerous occasions as when in the Sermon on the Mount He spoke of doing "the will of my Father in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

'I commit my spirit'

We most famously recall how He opened the model prayer saying, "Our Father who art in heaven" (Matt. 6:9) or His words of relinquishment from the cross: "Father into your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). The followers of Christ adopted this way of thinking about God by often speaking of Him as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Referring to God as Father conveys a certain intimacy or family connection in which God is not merely high and lifted up but also is close to those who know and love Him. Jesus caught this note of a loving relationship in the parable of the prodigal son.

The image of that waiting, loving, welcoming and restoring father in the parable speaks volumes to us about God's nature or attitude toward His imperfect people.

During this month we will explore some of the implications of God's fatherhood. 🌿

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.



‘Trouble free’

Unique transportation solutions to accommodate SBC annual meeting attendees

It’s possible you’ve wondered how traffic and parking is going to work at the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting next week. After all it’s no secret that at the moment Birmingham is missing the part of Interstates 20 and 59 that passes right over downtown.

But SBC meeting planners say they’ve been working to create a system that will make it as trouble free as possible.

Road projects

“Due to the current road improvement projects in the Birmingham area the SBC convention planning team has been working closely with local city planners and our local arrangements committee to implement a number of unique transportation solutions to accommodate our attendees,” said Bill Townes, the SBC Executive Committee’s vice president for convention finance who oversees planning for the SBC annual meeting.



Photo by Tracy Riggs

With so many road closures and so much heavy construction in downtown Birmingham, allow extra time for getting around. Visit www.5920bridge.com for detailed information or use the app *algotraffic*.

Check out these details to discover the best way for you to get to the meeting.

► Traffic

To find out the most up-to-date information on road conditions in

the area visit bjcc.org/know-before-you-go.php. Another helpful website is www.5920bridge.com or use the app *algotraffic*.

► Drop-off

If a friend, church bus or Lyft is dropping you off at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC) (the annual meeting venue), a designated spot for that is on 19th Street. (See the area marked P2 on the map, page 15.) If you’re the one driving the car or bus there’s no parking in this area but several parking lots are available nearby.

► Parking

If you don’t mind spending a few dollars, event organizers say there’s plenty of paid parking around the meeting venue.

For cars the cost is around \$10 per day, and the SBC convention planning team recommends you pick your lot based on what meeting you’re attending.

Legacy Arena

For events in BJCC’s Legacy Arena (such as the main meeting and Pastors Conference) they recommend lots P13, P15, P14, P4 and P7.

For events in the concert hall or theatre (such as the NAMB Chaplains Fellowship meeting or the B21 luncheon and panel) they suggest lots P15, P4, P13 and P7.

For meeting rooms (child care, for instance) try lots P4, P7 and P5. And for the exhibit hall they suggest P4, P7 and P5, P13 and P15.

If you’re driving a bus you can park in the lot on 23rd Street (marked P12 on the map) for \$25 per day.

ADA parking is available in all BJCC lots.

► Shuttles

For those who would like to avoid dealing with parking and traffic downtown, the SBC convention planning team has been working together with local city planners to come up with an extensive shuttle system running from area hotels as well as four park and ride lots — Bessemer Civic Center (1130 9th Ave. S.W., Bessemer); Gardendale First Baptist Church, (316 Mountain Crest Pkwy.); NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville (5700 Deerfoot Pkwy.); and Fairfield Inn & Suites in Fultondale (1795 Morris Ave.).

Shuttle buses are free thanks to help from the Sheraton Hotel and the City of Birmingham, and they will drop-off

and pick-up from the BJCC Circle Drive, which is the closest entrance for registration. Look for color-coded signage to know where to catch your ride.

To download a list of shuttle routes and schedules visit sbcanualmeeting.net/sbc19/transportation. You can also find them in the SBC Annual Meeting mobile app in the Attendee Resources section.

► Lyft credit

In addition to hotel and park-and-ride shuttles you can use an event credit code to book a ride through Lyft. Look for instructions about this credit in the SBC Annual Meeting app. (Grace Thornton)

Southern Baptist leaders preaching in area churches while in Birmingham

On June 9 — the Sunday before the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting — several local church pulpits will have special guest speakers.

Want to go hear one? Here’s a list of who will be where (as provided to *The Alabama Baptist*):

► J.D. Greear, SBC president and pastor of The Summit Church, Durham, North Carolina, will be preaching at Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Birmingham. Service times are 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.

► Ronnie Floyd, president of the SBC Executive Committee, will be speaking at First Baptist Church, Trussville. Traditional worship is at 9:15 a.m.; contemporary worship is at 10:45 a.m.

► Al Mohler, president of

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, will be preaching at The Church at Brook Hills, Birmingham. Service times are 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

► Adam Greenway, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, will be preaching at Liberty Baptist Church, Chelsea. Service times are 9:15 a.m. and 11 a.m.

► Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, will be preaching at Lakeside Baptist Church, Birmingham, at the 9:30 a.m. service only.

► Jeff Iorg, president of Gateway Seminary, will be speaking at First Baptist Church, Jemison, at a men’s breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and then preaching in the 11 a.m. service. (TAB)



Connecting with **kids** during the summer

Summer activities an opportunity to ‘detox’ children from screens, technology

By Rhett McKenzie
MAMFC, LPC, NCC
Special to The Alabama Baptist

For some families summer break is a welcomed relief from the rigorous activities a busy school schedule creates, while for others it can be the root of even more stress as parents now have the task of keeping their children entertained for two and a half months.

Many of us have grown dependent on the “built-in babysitter” — electronics. While electronics can serve a good purpose, many parents have come to rely too heavily on technology when it comes to entertaining our children. If not monitored closely, this over-reliance can lead to addictive behaviors and can affect our children in a harmful manner.

During the past few years alarming research has been reported related to the dangerous effects electronics have on a child’s brain.

Dr. Peter Whybrow, director of neuroscience at UCLA, refers to screen technologies as “electronic cocaine.” Other researchers have called electronics “digital heroin” because they have the same addictive effects on a child’s brain as drugs.

Tech-cautious parents

Ironically technical designers and engineers are often among the most tech-cautious parents.

Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, was a notoriously low-tech parent. Many Silicon Valley tech executives and engineers choose to enroll their

children in no-tech Waldorf Schools. Bill Gates’ family policy was no phones until 14.

If the creators of screen technology are taking measures to distance their own children from technology this should be an indication of just how much of an issue screen technology can be. And sadly the addictive qualities of screen technologies are only part of the problem.

Societal expectations

Since the iPhone was introduced in 2007 levels of anxiety and depression in children and adolescents have increased exponentially. A growing number of children today report feelings of anxiety, depression, loneliness and low self-worth. Children are constantly bombarded with lies from society of what they should look like and how they should dress, act and believe in order for society to accept them.

Not only does this kind of social media pressure produce great anxiety and create unrealistic expectations and ideals but it also leads to a higher level of depression due to not being able to live up to expressed societal expectations.

The research concerning the correlation of increased anxiety and depression in children and adolescents, along with the addictive nature of screen technologies, can seem overwhelming. The good news is additional research shows what it takes to help a child become a happy and healthy adult.

Several recent studies suggest



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children who receive affection from their parents are happier and healthier overall. Children who feel safe and secure in their family relationships tend to have higher self-esteem, improved academic performance, better parent-child communication and fewer psychological and behavioral problems.

The summer break presents parents with an opportunity not a burden. Summer provides a chance to “detox” our children from screen technology and opportunities to make and strengthen connections with our children — to go on vacations together, to find new “adventures” around town and to invest emotionally in our children, which can carry over for generations to come.

What Scripture told us first — “Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from Him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior’s hands” (Ps. 127:3–4, NLT) — and what science

now confirms is this: children need affection from parents in order to have happier and healthier lives.

Hands-on time

Just like the “warrior” or hunter who spends a great deal of hands-on time aiming his arrows so they accurately hit the mark so must we as parents invest in intimate time with our children to help them hit the mark of emotional health.

EDITOR’S NOTE — Faith & Family is a monthly look at important spiritual, cultural and relational issues facing today’s families. For more articles on contemporary topics like these go to PathwaysProfessional.org/blog.

Rhett McKenzie is a nationally certified licensed professional counselor serving Birmingham and central Alabama for Pathways Professional Counseling, a sister ministry of Alabama Baptist Children’s Homes & Family Ministries.



‘Whatever it takes’

Southern Baptist Convention sees giving increase while baptisms continue to decline

Southern Baptist congregations saw an increase of more than \$82 million in overall giving in 2018, according to the latest Annual Church Profile (ACP) report. However, other key metrics declined slightly in 2018 including baptisms, membership, average worship attendance and total number of Southern Baptist churches.

Cooperating churches

The number of churches cooperating with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) declined by 88 to 47,456 or 0.19%. Southern Baptists also reported 4,085 church-type missions last year, a decline of 291 or 6.65%. The ACP is compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources in cooperation with Baptist state conventions.

“Part of the Annual Church Profile process is for associations and state conventions to connect with each congregation and to

confirm they still exist and are cooperating together in ministry,” said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research.

Four state conventions saw double-digit growth in the number of Southern Baptist congregations. The Baptist General Convention of Texas added 44 congregations, the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention grew by 31, the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention added 22 congregations and the SBC of Virginia grew by 20.

Although Southern Baptist congregations reported increased giving, reported membership of those congregations declined by 192,404, down 1.28% to 14.8 million members.

Southern Baptist congrega-

tions baptized 246,442 people in 2018, a 3.02% decline from the 254,122 reported in 2017. Southern Baptists saw a 9.49% decline in baptisms from 2016 to 2017. In 2016, Southern Baptists reported a 4.89% decline in baptisms from the previous year.

“People need Jesus and they need Jesus now.”

**Ronnie Floyd
president and CEO
SBC Executive Committee**

“Seeing our neighbors or children follow Christ in believer’s baptism has never been something to take for granted,” McConnell said. “Every baptism reported signifies change that only the Holy Spirit can bring about.”

Ronnie Floyd, president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee (EC), agreed. “While this report contains news that concerns us greatly, we need to celebrate every life who was positively impacted by the gospel. As we look forward it is time to press reset spiritually and strategically in the Southern Baptist Convention,” he said.

“Prioritizing and elevating the advancement of the



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good news of Jesus Christ into every town, city and county in America, as well to every person across the world, must be recaptured by every church. Urgency is not an option for any of us as Christ-followers.

“People need Jesus and they need Jesus now. Our generation of Baptists must believe and determine now that we will do whatever it takes to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations.”

Several state conventions experienced growth in baptism numbers this past year. State conventions with the largest increases in baptisms in 2018 were the California SBC, which grew by 2,653 to 12,212; the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, which grew by 2,092 to 21,563; the Florida Baptist Convention, which grew by 1,245 to 26,162; the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which grew by 469

to 17,511; and the Colorado Baptist General Convention grew by 353 to 1,834.

Total church receipts and undesignated receipts were both up for the second year in a row. Total church receipts reported through the ACP increased 0.7% to 11.8 billion. Undesignated church receipts increased 0.87% to \$9.6 billion.

Giving totals

Giving through the SBC’s Cooperative Program (CP) is not included in the ACP statistical summary. Those totals are available through Baptist state conventions and the SBC EC which processes the funds given through the CP.

Individual congregations voluntarily report their ACP data to their local Baptist associations and/or their state conventions. National statistics are compiled and released when all cooperating state conventions have reported. (BP)



WEEKDAY MORNINGS ON WXJC

ADRIAN ROGERS JIM DALY DAVID JEREMIAH
ROBERT JEFFRESS CHARLES STANLEY MICHAEL YOUSSEF
TONY EVANS JAMES DOBSON CHARLES MORRIS
JOHN MACARTHUR ALISTAIR BEGG J VERNON MCGEE

AND AFTERNOONS LIVE



THE JOE LOCKETT SHOW
WEEKDAYS 3-5P
FM 101.1 & AM 850



THE MARK WHITE SHOW
WEEKDAYS 5-6P
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200 YEAR OLD CELEBRATION & PRAISE
JUNE 30th, 9:15 A.M.

Shiloh Baptist Church Somerville, AL, will commemorate the history of being 200 years old with scenes and music from the beginning of the Church to the present time.



- Everyone (former members and community) is invited to worship with us as we remember what God has done for Shiloh in years past and is doing now.
- Lunch will be provided

Isaiah 40:8 - The grass withers, the flower fades
But the word of our God will stand forever.

3 stories you should know



Wikimedia photo

The owner of the life-size replica of Noah's Ark in Kentucky has sued its insurers for refusing to cover rain damage. Ark Encounter says heavy rains caused a landslide on its access road and its five insurance carriers refused to cover nearly \$1 million in damages. In a 77-page lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court, Ark Encounter asks for compensatory and punitive damages. The ark itself was not damaged and the road has been rebuilt, according to the suit. (RNS)

SBCAL to vote on statement protecting minors

Associational leaders will vote in June on a document encouraging Southern Baptist associations, state conventions and churches to proactively address and prevent sexual abuse of minors.

The Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders (SBCAL) drafted the document in cooperation with officers of the Southern Baptist Convention Fellowship of State Executive Directors to serve as a resource and recommendation for churches and ministries.

Already approved by SBCAL and fellowship executives, the greater SBCAL membership will vote on the statement at the SBCAL annual meeting June 10–11 in Birmingham.

The full document is available at <https://www.sbcassociations.org/vote.html>. (BP)

High court upholds part of Indiana pro-life law

On May 28 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an Indiana law requiring the humane disposal of aborted babies, but refused to weigh in on the state's ban on abortions based solely on ethnicity, sex or disability.

Denise Burke, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom, said unborn babies "shouldn't be disposed of as 'medical waste' when they die before birth, regardless of whether their deaths are spontaneous, accidental or induced."

Burke and pro-life organizations expressed disappointment in the high court's failure to review the lower court's opinion on the law's prohibitions.

Planned Parenthood of Indiana and Kentucky challenged the law signed by then-Gov. Mike Pence, who is now vice president. (BP)

— NEWSBRIEFS —

International Mission Board looks to future, appoints 26 new missionaries



International Mission Board (IMB) trustees approved the appointment of 26 new missionaries to take the gospel to the nations during their May 22–23 meeting in Richmond, Virginia.

Trustees also considered pivotal changes in ministry advancement and prayer strategies and elected 2019–2020 officers among other business.

The new missionaries will be commissioned for service at a Sending Celebration June 11 at 4:20 p.m. during the afternoon session of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Birmingham.

The service will be streamed on sbc.net.

In his address to the board of trustees IMB President Paul Chitwood referenced Revelation 7:9, noting, "They are worshipping — worshipping the One who is worthy."

imb
INTERNATIONAL
MISSION BOARD

"We call that the IMB's vision but we're always quick to point out that it is, first and foremost, the vision of the Church," Chitwood said.

He said the fulfillment of that vision takes people all over the world — mountains, plains, cities, jungles, villages and refugee settlements — undeterred by immense challenges.

"And that's why we are here," he told trustees. "We are here to ensure they can go out there. We are here to do everything ... that has to be done to give them the support they need, the training they need, the resources they need to be as effective as they can be as they go." (IMB)

New Taiwan gay 'marriage' law passes despite voter rejection



A Christian coalition in Taiwan is lamenting the legalization of gay "marriage" in the country May 16, months after a majority of voters rejected such unions in a nationwide referendum.

Taiwan is the first Asian nation to legalize such unions. Parliament's vote counters a November 2018 referendum in which 67% of voters rejected gay "marriage."

Parliament was bound to change the law after the nation's Constitutional Court ruled in 2017 that Taiwan's civil code barring same sex unions was unconstitutional and gave lawmakers two years to replace the code. But the November 2018 referendum against gay "marriage" was expected to influence lawmakers to approve the weakest law acceptable to the court.

Taiwan joins 27 other nations where gay "marriage" is legal, according to Pew Research. (BP)

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief teams respond to Midwest tornadoes, flooding



Southern Baptists have mobilized disaster relief teams to help homeowners and share the gospel of Jesus Christ in storm-ravaged areas of the Midwest. More than 100 tornadoes swept through the central United States from Colorado to Ohio in



Wikimedia Commons

News near you

BALDWIN ASSOCIATION

► **Bayside Baptist Church, Lillian**, will host a Vacation Bible School (VBS) registration fun day June 8 from 9 a.m. to noon. Popcorn, snow cones, games and inflatables will be offered. Bayside Baptist's VBS will be conducted June 17-19 from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Tom Harris is pastor.

BIBB ASSOCIATION

► On May 19, **Ashby Baptist Church, Brierfield**,

celebrated an anniversary that might have never happened. Ashby Baptist was one of the five Bibb County churches

set on fire in a string of arsons in 2006. But 13 years later the church still stands and has marked its centennial anniversary.

Tim Parker, who was pastor at Ashby in 2006, was the guest speaker for the special service. Lori Epperson gave a history of the church then invited members to share their favorite memories. Anna Spier presented



Photo by Anna Spier

the church with a certificate on behalf of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission. Bibb Baptist Association associational mission strategist Bill Russell congratulated the church on the anniversary. Old photos, including photos of the old church, the burned church and the new building were on display, along with a "100 Years Ago in 1919" board featuring photos and prices of items in 1919.

Lunch followed the service and an afternoon singing with Karen Beck and New River.

"It was a wonderful day," Pastor Shannon Allen said. ► **First Baptist Church, Woodstock**, will host the Chuck Wagon Gang on June 8 at 7 p.m. For more information call 205-938-7479. Steven Hicks is pastor.

COFFEE ASSOCIATION

► **Coffee Baptist Association** will host the Never Alone Widows' Meeting on June 17 at the association office. Reservation deadline is June 10. To RSVP call 334-894-6411. John Granger is associational mission strategist.

SOUTHEAST ALABAMA ASSOCIATION

► **Memphis Baptist Church, Dothan**, ordained **Drew Whitehead** (second from left) and **Clay Greathouse** (second from right)

into the gospel ministry May 19. Both men grew up in Memphis Baptist and were called into ministry as students. Whitehead's ordination was requested by Selma Baptist Church, Dothan, where he was called to



Photo courtesy of Memphis Baptist

serve as student minister. Greathouse serves at Memphis Baptist as associate pastor of discipleship and children's minister. Also attending the ordination service were Evan Kohen (left), pastor of Selma Baptist; Jim Tate (center), pastor of Memphis Baptist; and Alan Bryan (right), pastor of Cloverdale Baptist Church, Dothan, and former youth minister at Memphis Baptist.

ST. CLAIR ASSOCIATION

► **Danny Courson** is the new associational mission strategist for **St. Clair Baptist Association**. He previously served as pastor of Odena Baptist Church, Sylacauga. Courson holds a bachelor's degree from Samford University in Birmingham and master and doctorate degrees from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Rhonda, have three children. ► **Joe Karr** is the new pastor of **Cook Springs Baptist Church, Pell City**. Karr has served several other churches in the surrounding area as pastor and in various other capacities. Karr is from Leeds.



COURSON

WEST CULLMAN ASSOCIATION

► **Seventh Street Baptist Church, Cullman**, will host Vacation Bible School on June 17-22 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. This year's theme is "Roar." For more information call 256-739-8724. Eric Martin is pastor. ☕

— NEWSBRIEFS —

late May, leaving at least eight dead. The storms led to extensive flooding and damage throughout the region.

Chainsaw teams have been at work throughout Oklahoma and relief efforts are expected to continue throughout the summer, said Don Williams, director of Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief.

"God can make something good out of a disaster," he said. "Southern Baptists are known for working through disaster to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We have a great opportunity to do that in Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas at this moment."

Sam Porter, the national director of Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, said there will be additional needs in southeast Kansas, where massive flooding has occurred all the way from the Kansas City border down to the Oklahoma border and all down southeast Kansas along the Missouri border. (BP)



NAMB photo

Alabama Baptist Kathy Litton to be nominated for SBC post

Alabama Baptist Kathy Litton, director of planter spouse development for the North American Mission Board (NAMB), will be nominated as registration secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) during the June 11-12 annual meeting in Birmingham.

Litton is the second nominee for SBC registration secretary and among only a few women in SBC's history nominated for an officer role. Current registration secretary Don Currence also will be nominated for a third term in the role, according to a previous announcement.

Litton is a member of Redemption Church, Saraland, in Mobile Baptist Association, where her husband, Ed, is pastor.

She has been a pastor's wife for more than 35 years and has participated in missions work both internationally and domestically. She has been a

member of two SBC committees and the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force.

Litton has been on NAMB's staff for eight years. (BP, TAB)

Jimmy Dukes, pastor of Spanish Trail, Daphne, dies at age 72

James E. "Jimmy" Dukes, longtime pastor of Spanish Trail Baptist Church, Daphne, died May 19. He was 72.

Before serving as pastor of Spanish Trail Baptist, Dukes was pastor of Judson Baptist Church, Atmore, for 27 years. A Selma native, he attended Auburn University and served in the Army National Guard.

Dukes also owned and operated Good Works Construction Company for nearly 40 years.

Dukes is survived by his wife of 51 years, Rheda; son, Jed; daughters, Tara and Shelley; five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. (Grace Thornton)



LITTON



DUKES

Believe again

CWJC helps former addict discover her calling

A New Orleans woman who struggled for years with homelessness and addiction is now helping to run a pottery ministry and working to open her own restaurant, thanks to support from Baptist ministries and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) Foundation funds.

'A miracle'

"It's a miracle," said Kay Bennett, executive director of the Baptist Friendship House, a ministry for homeless women and children on the edge of New Orleans' French Quarter. "If you had seen her for 10 years like that you would have never thought she could do what she's doing. It amazes even her."

Yvonne Schaad moved to New Orleans from New Jersey in 2001 to get away from a domestic violence situation, and after living through some hard years and weathering Hurricane Katrina she ended up on the streets homeless and battling alcoholism.

Year after year Bennett invited Schaad into Friendship House, a ministry of the North American Mission Board and New Orleans Baptist Association.

Over time she eventually started sleeping on the front porch, then accepted some of their snacks and hygiene products.



Photo courtesy of WMU

Pottery made by CWJC participants at Baptist Friendship House, New Orleans, will debut at the WorldCrafts store in the exhibit hall when the SBC comes to Birmingham June 9-12.

One day she started coming inside for showers, then Bible studies — and in July 2015 she stopped drinking completely.

"I accepted Jesus as my Savior in August 2015, and through His help and Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) at Friendship House I have regained the many things that the streets took from me," Schaad said. "I realize what a good friend God is in my life and He is the most important thing."

With the help of Friendship House staff, Schaad earned her GED studying at night under the street lights. In the years since she has gotten her driver's license back, secured a home of her own and earned her food handler certification.

And in 2018, CWJC presented her with the Sybil

Bentley Dove Endowment Award, its highest honor with a scholarship attached.

Bennett said the scholarship "encouraged Schaad and made her believe in herself."

Schaad used the money to enroll at a local community college where she's studying culinary arts with plans to one day own a food truck or café. She recently completed an intense algebra course with a 99.6 average.

"I have gained my self-respect back," Schaad said. "I have gained skills to help me obtain employment, and I have become self-sufficient."

SBC debut

With scholarship funds she also took a pottery class and is helping teach those skills to other women through CWJC, offering them both a creative outlet and a way to earn money.

Their pottery will debut at the WorldCrafts store in the exhibit hall of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors Conference and annual meeting June 9-12 in Birmingham. (WMU Foundation)



WMU photo

Yvonne Schaad used a CWJC scholarship to take a pottery class and now teaches other women those skills.

TAB CLASSIFIEDS

For information on placing a classified ad call 205-870-4720, ext. 102 or email ads@thealabamabaptist.org.

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR

Cave Spring Baptist Church, Priceville, Alabama, seeks full-time pastor with minimum five years experience. Only a God-called, energetic minister who cares for multi-generations, ready to reap the harvest; a person whose professional and personal life align with 1 Timothy 3:1-7 need apply. Deadline: June 30. Email: info@thecsbc.com for more information.

PASTOR

Camellia Baptist Church, 201 Woodvale Rd., Prattville, AL 36067, prayerfully seeking God's choice for a full-time pastor. All applicants should have previous senior pastor experience and have earned a masters of divinity. Resumes with photo may be mailed: ATTN: Pastor/Search. www.cbcprattville.org.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR

South Mobile First Baptist Church is seeking a dynamic, spirit-filled servant of God to serve initially as a bivocational pastor with the potential for transitioning to full time based on church growth. Send resume to: 10575 Dauphin Island Parkway, Theodore, AL 36582 or email c/o Search Committee at vgnelson@bellsouth.net.

MINISTER OF MUSIC

Parkview Baptist Church in Decatur, Alabama, is seeking a minister of music. Candidates should have a strong passion and sincere calling to lead all ages in worship, disciple and mentor new Christians and advance the gospel of Jesus Christ. Candidates must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. Please send resumes to: jenny.russell@parkviewdecatur.org.

STUDENT MINISTER

The Church at Eastern Oaks in Montgomery, Alabama, is seeking a full-time student minister. Eastern Oaks is a diverse and growing congregation in east Montgomery. The student minister will be responsible for leading and overseeing all student ministries including children, youth and college. A theological degree and experience are preferred. Submit your resume to: admin@easternoaks.org.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

First Baptist Church, Guntersville, is currently seeking a director of children's ministry. Please submit resume to Amy Fondren at [\[gvillefbc.org\]\(http://gvillefbc.org\). Director of Children's Ministry Search Committee.](mailto:afondren@</p>
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OTHER POSITIONS

PIANIST

New Georgia Baptist Church is seeking a pianist for Sunday morning worship. Paid position. Contact: jdmoman@charter.net.

BUSINESSES

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TRAVEL/VACATION

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AFFORDABLE BEACHSIDE CONDOS

Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, Alabama. Rent direct from Christian family owners. Lowest prices on the beach for over 25 years! Call Donna at 251-656-4935, Don at 251-752-2366, Eddie at 205-556-0368 or www.gulfshorescondos.com.

MINISTRIES

TAB PODCAST

The TAB News podcast provides content from *The Alabama Baptist* each week in a radio-show-style format for listeners to download and listen to at their convenience. Listen to the TAB News podcast anywhere you get your podcasts such as iTunes, Stitcher, etc., or visit www.thealabamabaptist.org/explore/podcasts. New episodes are released weekly.

Food trucks to offer lunch for SBC participants June 11-12 at Linn Park

FOOD TRUCKS
in LINN PARK
710 20th Street N

11 a.m.-3 p.m.
Tuesday
AND
Wednesday

Official Seal of Birmingham, Alabama
GOSPEL ABOVE ALL
BIRMINGHAM
Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tuesday, June 11

- ▶ Tamale Queen
- ▶ Cheezin Gourmet Grilled Cheese
- ▶ Saw's BBQ
- ▶ Steel City Pops
- ▶ Repicci's Italian Ice



Cheezin Gourmet Grilled Cheese
Cheezin Facebook photo

Wednesday, June 12

- ▶ Devil Dawgs
- ▶ Hollywood Grill
- ▶ Hyderabad Dum Zone (Indian)
- ▶ NOLA Ice
- ▶ Who Dat Snowballs



Steel City Pops
Steel City Pops Facebook photo



Complex Map

BJCC BIRMINGHAM-JEFFERSON CONVENTION COMPLEX

LOADING DOCKS HANDICAP

Complex Facilities

- A Theatre
- B Arena & Central Ticket Office
- C Concert Hall
- D North Exhibit Hall & Meeting Rooms
- E South Exhibit Hall & Meeting Rooms
- F East Exhibit Hall & Meeting Rooms
- G Forum Building
- H The Sheraton Hotel & Birmingham Ballroom
- I The Westin Birmingham

Parking Key

- P1 9th Avenue Parking | 100 Spaces
- P2 19th Street | 48 Spaces
- P3 11th Avenue | 22 Spaces
- P4 East Parking Garage | 250 Spaces
- P5 22nd Street Parking Deck | 1500 Spaces
- P6 Boutwell Parking Deck | 1600 Spaces
- P7 East Parking | 353 Spaces
- P8 Lot 8 | 157 Spaces
- P9 Lot 9 | 288 Spaces
- P10 Lot 10 | 120 Spaces
- P11 Lot 11 | 60 Spaces
- P12 Lot 12 | 90 Spaces
- P13 Premier Parking | 250 Spaces
- P14 West Parking | 190 Spaces

Church Bus Drop off & load

Hotel Shuttle Bus Drop off & load

Registration Exhibits

Exhibits

SBC Pastors' Conference
SBC Annual Meeting

Church Bus Parking

12TH AVENUE NORTH, 11TH AVENUE NORTH, 10TH AVENUE NORTH, 9TH AVENUE NORTH, 21ST STREET, 22ND STREET, 23RD STREET, 24TH STREET, 19TH STREET, 20TH STREET, 21ST STREET, 22ND STREET, 23RD STREET, 24TH STREET, RICHARD ARRINGTON JR. BOULEVARD NORTH

ALABAMA SPORTS HALL OF FAME, THE WESTIN BIRMINGHAM, THE SHERATON BIRMINGHAM, BIRMINGHAM BALLROOM, FORUM BUILDING, EAST EXHIBITION HALL, EAST MEETING ROOMS AND BALL ROOM, NORTH MEETING ROOMS, NORTH EXHIBITION HALL, SOUTH EXHIBITION HALL AND MEETING ROOMS, CENTRAL TICKET OFFICE, THEATRE, CONCERT HALL, PIAZZA, EAST PARKING GARAGE, EAST PARKING, WEST PARKING, PREMIER PARKING, BOUTWELL PARKING DECK.



2010 CROSSOVER BIRMINGHAM



Saturday, June 8
8:30 am - Training

10 am - Evangelistic Visitation
Across 7 Associations

BESSEMER - BIRMINGHAM - MUD CREEK - NORTH JEFFERSON
SHELBY - ST. CLAIR - SULPHUR SPRINGS

For information about specific locations and to register, visit CrossoverBHM.org



Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS



North American
Mission Board



ATTENDING THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION JUNE 11-12?

Stop by and visit the State Board of Missions booth in the East Hall, located between the NAMB and New Orleans Seminary booths!

IMB pledges to 'be a leader' in abuse prevention

International Mission Board (IMB) President Paul Chitwood responded to a report on the IMB's handling of past allegations of sexual abuse and sexual harassment with an apology to victims and a pledge for the future.

Opportunity to lead

IMB trustees heard recommendations May 22 from the firm conducting an external examination of past allegations and IMB's present policies and practices.

Kathryn Nash, leader of the examination task force from Gray Plant Mooty (GPM), presented findings from the firm's external ex-

amination during a trustee plenary session.

In her statement Nash reviewed the scope and process of the firm's examination and various recommendations resulting from the work.

"IMB has an opportunity to be a leader within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in prevention and response efforts," Nash said. "GPM's recommendations will enable IMB to improve its efforts to protect its personnel and their families and those who interact with its personnel and their families and to effectively and appropriately respond when there is an allegation of child abuse or

sexual harassment (including sexual assault)."

Chitwood responded to the presentation from GPM with an acknowledgement that "churches and mission agencies are not exempt from evil and sin" and the imperative that the IMB, SBC and Christian believers must demand the highest standards in abuse prevention and response.

"On behalf of the International Mission Board, to any person who has been affected by these actions of anyone associated with IMB, I offer a heartfelt, sincere apology that these injustices have occurred in your lives," Chitwood said.

"I recognize that some people were harmed by the way IMB has responded to these situations throughout our 174-year history and for that, on behalf of the IMB, I apologize," he said. "I commit to you today that we will do better in the future."

Chitwood noted IMB's trustees and senior leaders already are at work to implement the recom-

mendations presented by the examination. IMB is "committed to making the changes necessary to better prevent instances of child abuse and sexual harassment (including sexual assault), and to better care for victims while holding perpetrators accountable," he said.

In his response Chitwood reiterated the IMB strongly encourages any church, entity or other employer who is considering working or partnering with former IMB personnel to contact IMB at references@imb.org to obtain a reference on that individual "so that we can do our part to help you make wise and informed hiring decisions."

'One too many'

In July 2018 then-IMB President David Platt called for an external examination of IMB's handling of past allegations regarding child abuse and sexual harassment — including sexual assault — as well as a review of IMB's policies and

practices. IMB trustee officers interviewed numerous potential outside investigators for the task and selected GPM, headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

After Chitwood's election as IMB president in November 2018 he affirmed his commitment to the examination.

"On behalf of the trustees, I'm grateful that we walked through this process," said Lisa Lovell, a trustee officer who represented IMB on the task force. "One instance of abuse is one too many. We've learned so much and implementing the recommendations will help us improve our prevention and response efforts."

IMB encourages anyone who has been a victim of abuse by its personnel to report it to authorities. In addition victims can contact IMB on a confidential hotline at 866-292-0181 or email advocate@imb.org so IMB can provide care to that victim and take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of others. (BP)

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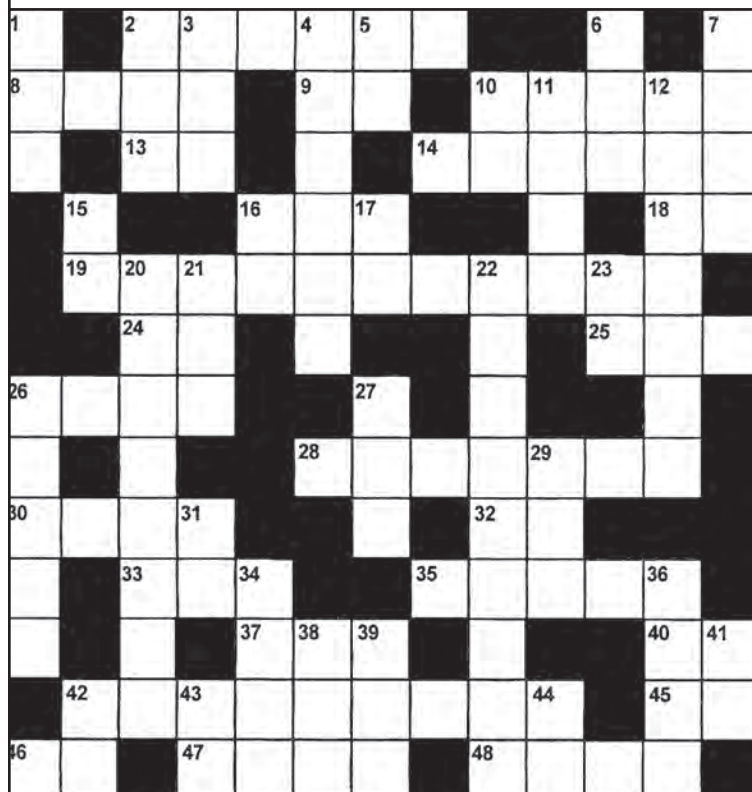
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Looking for the answers to this week's crossword? Those are now on page 2 so we can make the puzzle clues larger and easier to read. Happy puzzling!

Christian Crossword

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Across

2. Charge ___ and encourage him. (Deut. 3:28)
8. Terrorist.
9. Ye shall be ___ gods. (Gen. 3:5)
10. I ___ pleasant bread. (Dan. 10:3)
13. To ___ or not to ___.
14. Second book of the Bible.
16. Past.
18. He shall cry unto ___. (Ps. 89:26)
19. The Lord saved Hezekiah ... from ... ___. (2 Chron. 32:22)
24. Ascending up ___ Jerusalem.
25. I will let down the ___. (Luke 5:5)
26. ___ the Baptist.
28. First book of the Bible.
30. Rolled back the stone from the ___. (Matt. 28:2)
32. Yes. (Spanish)
33. Buddy.
35. O.T. books of the Bible.

37. A grain often used for cereal.
40. I ___ that I ___.
42. O foolish ___. (Gal. 3:1)
45. ___ Lord and ___ God.
46. Made himself of ___ reputation. (Phil. 2:7)
47. So be it.
48. These are the three ___ of Noah. (Gen. 9:19)

Down

1. Long ___.
2. A son of Issachar. (Gen. 46:13)
3. They shall be ___ flesh. (Gen. 2:24)
4. Minor prophet.
5. We.
6. Take up thy ___. (Matt. 9:6)
7. The wringing of the ___ bringeth blood. (Prov. 30:33)
10. Implement for cutting down trees.
11. Organized travel.
12. Fourth book of the Bible.
15. Postscript. (abbr.)

16. ___ angel of the Lord. (Luke 1:11)
17. Ocean. (abbr.)
20. Behold, a man of ___. (Acts 8:27)
21. Prefix for not.
22. Tenth book of the New Testament.
23. That I am ___ the Father. (John 14:10)
26. A son of Leah. (Gen. 35:23)
27. Last book of the Bible. (abbr.)
29. ___ no more. (John 5:14)
31. Egyptian sun god.
34. Rich soil.
36. Belonging to Sam.
38. They ... ___ the sacrifices of the dead. (Ps. 106:28)
39. A metal.
41. ___ name is Legion. (Mark 5:9)
42. ___ thy way; thy son liveth. (John 4:50)
43. Note on the scale.
44. Yet ___ as by fire. (1 Cor. 3:15)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For June 9

Explore the Bible

By Jay T. Robertson, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



ON MISSION 1 Timothy 2:1–15

Through Prayer (1–7)

We are instructed to pray for our leaders so we may lead a tranquil and quiet life. Paul was not encouraging a life of ease. Rather he meant a life free of disturbances, such as wars and persecutions, would facilitate the spread of the gospel.

Paul also instructed the believers to live lives of godliness and dignity. In other words they should do nothing to create an unnecessary disturbance that might hinder the advancement of the gospel.

The church must never become an exclusive club for a select group of people. It is pleasing to God our Savior for His Church to pray for Him to save all kinds of people. Prayer must be made on behalf of all people because salvation was intended for all regardless of rank, race, social position or nationality. We must pray for God to save people because there is but one God and one mediator between God and humanity. And this one mediator, Christ Jesus, is the one ransom for all who will be saved.

Paul was appointed by God to teach the Gentiles the gospel in faith and truth.

Churches must not think prayer must be made for citizens but not for those in authority. Neither can churches think prayer must be offered only for Jews and not for Gentiles.

Led by Godly Men (8)

In public worship men are to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. The pastors naturally would take the lead (1 Tim. 5:17). However, these hands must be holy and the prayer must be offered in the proper spirit. If the heart of a person is filled with anger or malice against his brother his prayer is not acceptable to God. The men who lead in corporate prayer must pray with purity before God and with peace before others.

Supported by Godly Women (9–15)

The mission of the church is to take place through prayer led by godly men and supported by godly women. It is important to keep in mind that God created both men and women in His own image and likeness.

Men and women are equal in the eyes of God, but God has assigned men and women different roles in the home and in the church. The roles of both are very important.

I follow the doctrine of complementarianism and see it as God's design — which is therefore for His glory and our good.

Apparently false teachers in Ephesus were teaching women in Christ were liberated. They did not need to get married and have children. They could wear whatever they wanted, no matter how distracting. They could even serve as a pastor and exercise authority over men.

But Paul said in verses 9–10: “I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.”

In my understanding of Scripture godly women should not teach as pastors or elders in the church. They should listen willingly to the teaching of the pastors and teach in various settings of the church in accordance with pastoral instruction.

Consistent with my biblical interpretation, women should not lead as pastors or elders in the church. They should submit to the servant leadership of the pastors and lead in various positions of the church under the authority of pastoral leadership.

Women are sanctified as they glorify God in the distinct roles and responsibilities He has entrusted to them. 🌿

Bible Studies for Life

By Roy E. Ciampa, Ph.D., S. Louis and Ann W. Armstrong

Professor of Religion, Samford University



DEBORAH: ENCOURAGING FAITH Judges 4:1–9; 5:1–5

This week we learn from the remarkable faith of Deborah, who was faithful not only in living out her own calling but also in encouraging others to be faithful in living out God's purposes for them.

We influence others when we live out our calling. (4:1–5)

When Israel fell back into their idolatrous patterns the Lord carried out the discipline promised in the Mosaic covenant: He gave them into the hands of pagan kings. The Israelites had been oppressed by Jabin (and his commander, Sisera) for 20 years. We don't know how long Deborah served as God's prophetess under such difficult circumstances, but God raised her up to guide Israel in these dark times.

She lived out her calling in Israel's midst at a time when assurance God would still speak to His people was a desperate need. Deborah ministered in a time of extended longing to see God bring relief from the suffering Israel had brought on itself.

As Deborah faithfully served God and Israel people learned to trust her judgment. While she was faithfully fulfilling her calling — and thanks to the way she carried out her calling — many in Israel turned to the Lord for help.

We can encourage others to live out their God-given tasks. (4:6–9)

Israel finally heard the news they had been longing for: God would give them victory over their oppressors. Deborah sent a message to Barak in the northern territory of Naphtali and delivered God's order to him to gather a great army from his region at Mount Tabor (west and south from the Sea of Galilee).

Jabin's army (led by Sisera) had superior military weaponry of iron chariots but God would lead them to take their chariots and their foot soldiers to the Kishon River where He would give Israel victory over them.

Barak was being asked to lead

thousands of men in battle against a superior power that had been humiliating Is-

rael for a generation. His faith was in need of bolstering. He probably insisted Deborah go up with him because he and the troops recognized her prophetic status and believed God would be more certain to give them victory if her life were on the line as well as theirs. Deborah was not only committed to fulfilling her own God-given role but to doing what she could to encourage others to fulfill their God-given callings as well. She went with Barak despite the potential personal cost.

God is honored when we live out what He leads us to do. (5:1–5)

In response to their dramatic victory Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise that reinforced the importance of each one willingly fulfilling whatever role God asked of him or her, with godly leaders stepping up to the plate and their people willingly offering themselves in God's service as well. In this way God worked through the whole group to accomplish His purposes and bring glory to Himself. In this case God demonstrated to the people of Israel and to all who would see or hear of Israel's victory that it was He, the Lord, who delivered His people.

The Lord is described in verses 4–5 using storm imagery the Canaanites associated with the power of Baal. The song's references to the heavens pouring down water (5:4) as well as the plan to lead Sisera's troops down to the Kishon River (4:7) may suggest God leveraged the iron chariots' vulnerability in muddy terrain in giving Israel victory. The Canaanites thought of Baal as the god of storm, but it was the Lord who showed up in a storm theophany to bring victory to Israel instead. God triumphed over Baal and Israel over its enemies thanks to women and men of faith who lived out their callings in challenging times. 🌿



Media reviews

MOVIES/TV

'Secret Life of Pets 2' leads June's family-friendly spotlight

By **Michael Foust**
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

The Secret Life of Pets" was the fourth-highest grossing film of 2016 and one of the most family-friendly too with plenty of laughs and life lessons for parents and children.

Its sequel hits theaters June 7 and in a rare feat for any movie, surpasses its predecessor for entertainment and message.

Yes, "The Secret Life of Pets 2" (PG) is better than the first one.

It leads this month's family-friendly spotlight.

The animated film continues the story of canines Max, Duke and other pets as they navigate life in the big city.

Pets and children

Although it has many of the same characters, it contains a different plot and focus. "The Secret Life of Pets" spotlighted the relationship between pets and their owners.

In "The Secret Life of Pets 2," the story examines the unique bond between pets and children. That's because Katie, who owns Max and Duke, gets married and has a baby.

Max initially hates this new arrangement yet soon grows attached to the child — a boy.

"He's perfect," Max says of Katie's baby. "And I'm never going to let anything bad happen to him."

Max's owner then visits a farm in the country introducing the family (including Max and Duke) to animals they've never met.



It stars Patton Oswalt as Max, Eric Stonestreet as Duke, Kevin Hart as Snowball the rabbit and Harrison Ford as a new dog, Rooster.

The film celebrates children, child-rearing and pets. It also teaches children lessons on courage and friendship.

It's 99% family-friendly — one of the dogs says "pi--ed" — and contains only one or two scenes that sensitive children might find disturbing. It is rated PG for ani-

“‘The Secret Life of Pets 2’ hits theaters June 7 and in a rare feat for any movie, surpasses its predecessor for entertainment and message.”

MICHAEL FOUST
movie reviewer

mal peril, action and rude humor.

Also worth watching this month:

► **"Cop and a Half: New Recruit"** — A tween girl helps a detective solve a crime (malicious drones are flying around the city). Now on Netflix, this live-action film won't win any major awards but it hits the bullseye for being funny and family-friendly. It's the sequel to the 1993 movie "Cop and a Half." Rated PG for some mild action and rude humor.

► **"Oddball"** — A family trains a dog named "Oddball" to protect a penguin sanctuary from fox attacks. Based on a true story and streaming free on Amazon Prime, "Odd-

ball" (PG) has a few content problems (the single mom says d--n; it is implied she spent the night with a man out of town; and the grandfather briefly "talks" to his deceased wife). Oddball and the other animals are fun to watch though.

► **"Wonder Park"** — A young girl loses but then rediscovers her joy for life after her mom becomes sick. The movie gets its name from the imaginary theme park the girl created with her mom. "Wonder Park" began streaming and

released on DVD in early June. It was widely panned by critics but I'm guessing most children will love it. It's nearly 100% family-friendly and has solid messages about using your imagination and finding joy in the midst of tragedy. Rated PG for some mild thematic elements and action.

► **"Les Miserables"** (2019) — PBS released this music-less version of the classic story earlier this year. I was skeptical it would work ... but I ended up loving it. The story follows ex-convict Jean Valjean as he is shown grace and given a second chance by a priest. It's a story of redemption that brought

me to tears even without the music. But it's not for children. You better watch this one with your remote in hand. 📺



'The Secret Life of Pets 2'

Photo courtesy of Illumination

Meet the reviewer

Michael Foust covers the intersection of faith and entertainment as a media reviewer for The Alabama Baptist. He also is the husband of an amazing wife and the father of four young children.

‘Magic of ministry’

Magic, illusion takes children’s minister places other pastors ‘can never go’

Tying people up, stabbing them with swords and cutting them in half are some of David Garrard’s favorite tools for sharing the gospel.

They work so well because they get people’s attention, the Samford University alum explains.

“It makes me an interesting person,” says Garrard, a 65-year-old

How to pray:

▶ Pray David Garrard will continue to receive opportunities to use his magic show to spread the gospel across the country.

▶ Pray those attending David Garrard’s shows will see the joy and love of Christ through his ministry. (TAB)

Kentuckian. “Some of the things I do might be able to get you to listen to me for five minutes.”

Magically speaking he’s the real deal. But he’s also described as equally talented and dedicated as a pastor to children and their families, a ministry position he held 42 years at St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville, until his retirement in September 2018.

Garrard admits that as a young college student at Samford in Birmingham and later a seminary student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, he never saw children’s ministry being in the cards for him.

“If you had told me ... ‘You are going to go to a church, you are going to stay there 42 years, you’re going to be working with children and still doing your magic,’ I would have gone, ‘You got the wrong crystal ball, buddy. Because that’s not me.’”



Photos by Scott Henson/BNG

Magician and illusionist David Garrard performs at the Kentucky State Fair.

In hindsight, however, that path seems clear.

From the beginning he purposefully integrated magic and ministry using magic and other media to illustrate gospel truths.

Complementing roles

Garrard says his ministry and magic complement each other.

“That’s when the magic of ministry comes in,” he said.

It also requires a lot of hard work and throughout his ministry Garrard has steadfastly resisted advertising himself as an evangelist performer.

“I do not like to be called a Christian magician,” he says. “I’m a magician who is a Christian.”

That approach enables him to take

his tricks and his faith into a wide range of venues. “As a magician I go places my pastor can never go.”

Mac King, whose ongoing “Mac King Comedy Magic Show” has been running at Harrah’s Las Vegas for 20 years, said Garrard has developed a performance that opens the way for his beliefs to shine through.

“If you spend five minutes with him you know he’s a genuinely great human being, and if you watch him do magic for five minutes you know he’s a genuinely great magician,” King says.

David Garrard also is frequently the emcee for *The Alabama Baptist’s* night of entertainment event series. (BNG, TAB)



After 42 years in children’s ministry David Garrard (shown here with assistant Stephanie Bell) made his passion for magic and illusion full time, performing across the country as a way to spread the gospel.