

# The Alabama Baptist

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Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

Rodney and Mary Leah Miller with their twins, Dalton and Mary Elizabeth, who were born after a journey through embryo adoption.



Photo courtesy of Liz Allison Photography

## ‘A chance at life’

### Birmingham couple senses Lord’s leading during embryo adoption journey

By June Mathews  
The Alabama Baptist

Seven years into their infertility journey, Rodney and Mary Leah Miller had come to a crossroads. The most recent of several attempts to achieve pregnancy through in vitro fertilization had failed, and any future attempt, they had been told, would likely produce the same results.

“Unfortunately, our genetic mate-

rial was not producing viable embryos,” Mary Leah said. “Rodney had asked me to pray about traditional adoption, but I felt like the Lord had impressed upon me that I would be pregnant.”

#### Learning more

As the Millers, who are members of Christ Fellowship Church in Homewood, explored options, they learned about embryo adoption.

“You would think that after walking this journey for so long, we would have been familiar with it,” Mary Leah said. “We found out when some friends told us about some friends of theirs who had been able to have a baby through embryo adoption.”

Intrigued, the Millers reached out to the adopting couple, and that’s how they learned about the Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program.

“After we hung up the phone with them, we went straight to the Snowflakes website, and for the first time in a long time, we got a new sense of hope and excitement,” Mary Leah said. “Not only was it a new option for starting our family, but it also offered me an opportunity to be pregnant.”

With the belief that life begins at conception, Snowflakes, a division (See ‘The Lord’s,’ page 11)

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SCAN ME

# Legacy status

## 3 generations of Bryant family earn UM degrees

The years on their diplomas span more than half a century, but three generations of the Bryant family are now bonded in another way — as graduates of the University of Mobile.

Shortly after Howard Jackson “Jackie” Bryant married his wife, Sandy, he enrolled in school at UM. A member of the class of 1968, Jackie found UM to be a wonderful, Christian school that he was proud to be a part of, his daughter Candace said.

And that’s why Candace decided to follow in her dad’s footsteps. She had heard many stories from her dad about campus life at UM, and she wanted to continue the tradition.

Candace met her husband, Scott Peters, at UM, and the two married following their 1996 graduation.

They always held fond memories of UM and dreamed of returning, so they were “ecstatic” when they learned their daughter, Madilyn, had been accepted into the university’s master of athletic training program.

The family made another UM memory on May 4, 2024, when Madilyn crossed the stage to receive her graduate diploma.

“The University of Mobile will



Photo courtesy of Candace Peters

**Above:** Madilyn Peters (left) celebrates her 2024 University of Mobile graduation with her mom, Candace Bryant Peters (class of 1996) and grandfather Jackie Bryant (class of 1968). **Right:** Jackie and Candace Bryant at her freshman orientation in 1993.



Photo courtesy of Candace Peters

always hold a special place in our hearts and who knows — maybe the legacy will continue for many generations to come,” Candace Peters said. (The Alabama Baptist)



Photo courtesy of Candace Peters

The 1968 graduating class of the University of Mobile (shown above) included graduate Howard Jackson “Jackie” Bryant, who would become the father and grandfather of future UM graduates — daughter Candace and granddaughter Madilyn, as well as son-in-law Scott.



Photo courtesy of Candace Peters

### The Alabama Baptist

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

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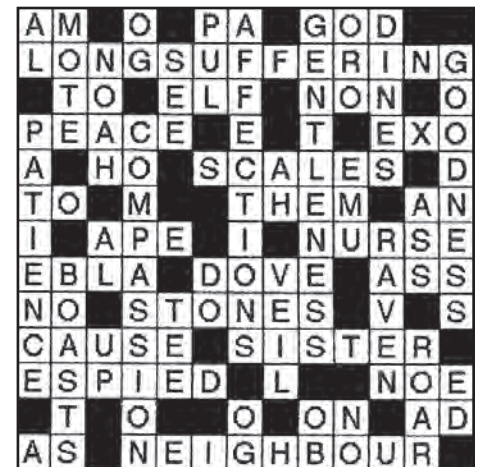
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The crossword puzzle can be found on page 15.



# Rashional Thoughts

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

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## When is too much of a good thing truly too much?

**E**mail message threads — an excellent form of communication when working off a laptop or desktop computer but excruciatingly painful when attempting to keep up with an email conversation on a phone.

The phone-based emails hide attachments and cause recipients to easily get lost in the clutter that forms as the messages stack on top of each other.

Fortunately, we can change the email setting to organize by threading or turn that feature off.

If you've experienced confusion over responses (or seemingly nonresponses) from someone through email, then be sure to change the threading feature to what you prefer.

### Adjusting for screen size

Accessing your email from a laptop or desktop computer on occasion also helps clarify how the messages are intended to look.

Small mobile devices don't have as much surface real es-

tate, so they are forced to adapt and realign the various digital platforms showcased on their screens.

For instance, when you pull up a website on your phone, the layout of the site looks different than when you pull that same site up on a computer monitor.

Experiment by looking at [thealabamabaptist.org](http://thealabamabaptist.org) or [thebaptistpaper.org](http://thebaptistpaper.org) on your phone and a laptop side by side.

### Technology frustrations

What are other technology frustrations you've experienced lately?

Maybe streaming services on your TV stalling in the middle of a show or constantly using the "forgot password" feature on various accounts?

Maybe its spending way too much energy attempting to determine which emails are legitimate and which ones aren't.

As helpful as the world of technology continues to be in so many areas of life, it also creates its own form of exhaustion, complications and distractions.

And beyond simply aggravating us because a particular device, platform or resource doesn't live up to our expectations, an untamed digital world can be harmful to our health.

### Surgeon general warning

In fact, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy shared in an opinion piece in the New York Times recently, that "The mental health crisis among young people is an emergency — and social media has emerged as an important contributor.

"Adolescents who spend more than three hours a day on social media face double the risk of anxiety and depression symptoms, and the average daily use in this age group, as of the summer of 2023, was 4.8 hours.

"Additionally, nearly half of adolescents say social media makes them feel worse about their bodies."

Murthy also reported in a 2023 advisory, which can be found online at [hhs.gov](https://www.hhs.gov), that "limits on the use of social media have resulted in mental health benefits for young adults and adults."

With the brain development of children and adolescents being more vulnerable than adults, the assumption is that time limits are not only important, but vital.

In fact, everyone putting boundaries on screen time, especially as it relates to social media, should only improve our health in some form on another.

Was it Shakespeare who first used the phrase "too much of a good thing"?

Did we as a culture dive so deep into technology, social media and other digital offerings that we've found ourselves with much too much of a good thing?

### What can we do?

What needs to happen to swing the pendulum back a bit?

How does your family keep fresh air, eye contact and activities that don't require scrolling from becoming extinct in your daily lives?

What ideas could you share with others?

How can churches make a difference in this area?

# Your Voice



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

## Sabbaticals offer ministers time for rest, renewal, reflection

By **Chris Crain**

Executive director, Birmingham Metro Baptist Association

**T**he concept of a sabbatical, traditionally associated with academic and professional settings, is increasingly recognized as a valuable practice within the local church.

A sabbatical offers ministers a designated time for rest, renewal and spiritual growth, ultimately benefiting both the individual and their congregation.

One exemplary case of this practice can be seen in the ministry of pastor Michael Wallace, who serves as the vice moderator for Birmingham Metro Baptist Association.

In this important volunteer role, Michael has done an incredible job

representing his church and serving our administrative committees and staff. His dedication and leadership have been invaluable assets to our association.

Not too long ago, Michael's church, North Highlands Baptist Church in Hueytown, reached out to our office to formulate a policy regarding sabbaticals for their ministry staff. We had the privilege of being a resource in developing this policy.

### Long-term effectiveness

The BMBA consulted with representatives from the personnel committee and provided examples of policies. As a result, North Highlands now has a formal sabbatical policy included in their employee

handbook, marking a significant step in supporting their staff's long-term well-being and effectiveness.

Michael has been a faithful servant at North Highlands for 21 years. He began his ministry as the student pastor, a role he held for 15 years.

Six years ago, he was called to serve as the senior pastor.

Recognizing his long-standing dedication and hard work, the church deemed Michael a well-deserving recipient of a month-long sabbatical — in addition to the vacation time he had earned.

During his sabbatical, Michael plans to spend quality time with his family, an essential aspect of personal renewal. He also intends to visit other churches to observe and learn from what God is doing among different congregations.

Additionally, he will spend time at The Cove, the retreat center of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, known for its serene environment conducive to spiritual reflection and growth.

On a recent Sunday, I had the honor of preaching in the pulpit at North Highlands Baptist during Michael's first Sunday away on his sabbatical.

What I found was a vibrant and healthy congregation composed of all ages. The church was bustling with activity, having just welcomed home one missions team and preparing to send out another the following week.

Despite their busy schedule, church members took time to pray

for Michael, distributing prayer guides to be used during his time away. It was heartening to witness firsthand how the congregation was actively supporting their pastor during his sabbatical.

Of course, the church staff members were more than willing and capable to provide additional support to the church during Michael's absence.

The positive impact of Michael's sabbatical on both him and his church is already evident.

The congregation's continued prayers and support during this period highlight the mutual benefits of such a practice.

For Michael, this time away will provide the necessary strength and renewal to continue his long and beneficial ministry.

### Forward-thinking policy

Given his relatively young age and his responsibilities as a father, the investment North Highlands has made in Michael through this sabbatical is likely to bless both him and the congregation for many years to come.

Sabbaticals are a profound blessing for ministers and their churches. By providing ministers with dedicated time for rest and renewal, churches can foster sustained, effective ministry. Michael's sabbatical is a testament to the positive outcomes that can arise from such forward-thinking policies.

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Chris Crain serves as executive director of Birmingham Metro Baptist Association. This column first appeared in the BMBA email newsletter.*

## Churches removing barriers

“Like the man carried by four friends and lowered through the roof to get to Jesus, some face physical barriers,” said **Gary Felton**, minister of special needs ministry at FBC Dallas. “Others encounter social barriers that make it challenging to connect or find their place. Churches that break down barriers and remove obstacles will find families impacted by special needs will come joyfully to be a part of their fellowship.”

“There's no universal set of symptoms for autism,” said **Wayne Yeager**, lead pastor of

Bethany Baptist Church in Liberty Township, Ohio, whose 9-year-old son, Anakin, has autism. “My goal ... is to find a way for him to understand the truth of Jesus and accept Him as his Lord and Savior.”

“We need to normalize the conversation and break the stigma” of poor mental health, said **Ryan Busler**, who served as a missionary with his wife, Julie, who struggled with mental health issues. “As parents and ministers, we need to do everything we can to facilitate these conversations.”

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“God is always working for your good. What one thing can you do today to show your gratitude?”

KAREN MOORE  
karenmooreauthor.com

## Understanding intercession, truths related to the Christian life vital for church health

By Sam Wolfe

Veteran pastor and evangelist, Huntsville

Thousands of Southern Baptist Convention churches have ceased to grow and are on a numerical plateau or in a downward spiral.

There are reasons why most of these churches do not grow. I want to name two primary reasons.

### 1. The great Bible principle of intercession is abandoned.

In His sovereignty, God has chosen to limit Himself to the intercession of His people.

What God does, He does in His people, with His people and through His people. Churches die when there is no intercession, for God does not work independently of His people.

### Meaning of intercession

Modern man has changed the meaning of the Bible principle of intercession. They call it intercessory prayer and claim that intercession is merely calling the names of others in prayer.

An unsaved person could do that

— and also a backslider — but that would not be intercession.

A study of the life of the Jesus reveals His intercession. Jesus cried, sighed, travailed with sorrow, grief and tears. He was crowned with thorns, pierced with spikes and a spear. He was scourged and spat upon. His beard was pulled out. And He was nailed to a cross. He drank the cup given to Him and “made intercession.”

The truth is: To win souls we must weep over souls. We must suffer for them as Jesus did. When Jesus said to the woman of Canaan, “Great is your faith,” He saw her taking the place of her daughter, taking her pain and suffering on herself and receiving by faith what her daughter needed (Matt. 15:28).

Hezekiah said, “This is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring forth” (Isa. 37:3). Does this not describe many barren churches? They are barren because they do not know intercession.

During His life on earth, Jesus

had compassion for people and prayed with “strong crying and with tears.” We may not die on a cross, but we must enter into His sufferings as Paul did. He wrote, “That I may know Him and the fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10).

This is necessary to become an intercessor. Paul wrote: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ ... to suffer for His sake” (Phil. 1:29).

God’s involvement in the ministry of a church is determined by intercession.

### 2. There is a serious lack of understanding of the Christian life.

An understanding of these truths is an absolute necessity for reaching people:

- ▶ What is a Christian
- ▶ How to become a Christian
- ▶ Repentance and faith
- ▶ Forgiveness
- ▶ What is the Christian life
- ▶ How to live the Christian life
- ▶ Understanding the gospel
- ▶ Sin

These truths and the principle of intercession must be taught.

## Various Christian life, denominational thoughts

Cheat sheet of Satan’s whispers:

If only you were ...

People think you’re so ...

Why can’t you just ...

You’re too much.

You’re not enough.

Don’t let him get you into a state of defeat by believing & repeating his scripts. God knows you completely & loves you fully!

**Lysa TerKeurst**

@LysaTerKeurst on X

I think it helpful, and healthy, to wrestle through various interpretations of “2nd and 3rd tier” doctrines.

They help us to pursue the truth.

But we should not act as though

Jude’s admonition to “contend for the faith” is a call to pit believers

against one another. #SameTeam

**Clay Smith**

@claysmith79 on X

When I was in high school, I was taught Baptist distinctives using a simple acronym. Still helpful today!

- ▶ Biblical authority
- ▶ Autonomy of the church
- ▶ Priesthood of believers
- ▶ Two ordinances: Lord’s Supper/ baptism

▶ Individual soul competency

▶ Saved church membership

▶ Two offices: pastor/deacon

▶ Separation of church/state

**Andrew Hebert**

@andrewhebert86 on X

Here are the typical stages of pastoral ministry if you stay in a local church long enough:

Years 1–5: Becoming the pastor

Years 6–10: Being the pastor

Years 11–15: Fixing what you

broke in years 1–10

**Brian Croft**

@PastorCroft on X

## Live joyfully and honor God now

Vision exam time. The tech bumps the black monster with two peep holes against your forehead.

Click. “Which is better, one or two?” “Two.” Click. “Two or three?” “Three.” And on it goes. Click, click, click until the assistant finds your vision sweet spot. New spectacles for you.

The Preacher was a bit of an optometrist. He offered help to find a sweet spot for your perspective on life (Eccles. 11:8–10; 12:1–8).

Solomon believed life is good and should be enjoyed all the way to the end. But he acknowledged that one day the light of life transitions to the darkness of death.

Hindrances like physical or moral weaknesses, irritating people or family problems may pop up.

Endure because the Creator is involved with you from beginning to end. The reality of God’s future judgment motivates you to live in joyful ways that honor God now.

The best time to prepare for the difficulties of old age is while young, he advises: “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth” (Eccles. 12:1a).

Older folks show the signs of age — loss of balance, strength, memory. Eventually it’s time for funeral arrangements. Relish every moment as the process of living prepares you for a new home beyond this one.

Solomon advocated a sweet spot from which to view the natural progression toward death.

Life’s meaningless unless you welcome God’s guidance at every step along the way. What are you embracing that sucks the joy from life? Will you let God have it? Click.

**Darryl Wood**

Midweek devotional for Liberty Baptist in Chelsea

# Faithful to the call

## Southern Christian writers share stories, learn more about their craft

By **Dianna L. Cagle**  
The Alabama Baptist

One of the common problems writers face remains they “cannot not write,” said Denise George, keynote speaker for the Southern Christian Writers Conference held June 6–8 at The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham.

George, a prolific writer and leader of an online community called Christian Writers for Life, was one of the keynote speakers for the conference, as was historical romance fiction author Grace Hitchcock.

More than 160 writers were in attendance at the event and even more joined online.

Writers went to workshops on publishing, character development, copy editing, travel writing, blogging, diversity in writing and more.

“Don’t let anybody put out your fire,” said George, who said God placed a “tiny seed inside our heart to” write that would “soon ignite, burn and grow.”



Photo by Tracy Riggs Frontz/The Alabama Baptist  
Cheryl Wray serves as director of the Southern Christian Writers Conference.

She urged them to be faithful to their call to write.

“Keep that fire in your heart and soul burning,” she said, offering that they could rekindle the embers with rest and sleep and fuel the fire with Scripture.

During Hitchcock’s speech, she

asked if anyone else felt imposter syndrome in the writing world.

“The list of doubts can go on and on,” she said. “It’s really important to address those doubts and bring them to God.”

She offered tips for battling writer’s block, marketing and the submission process.

Participants also heard testimonies from authors Laura Lee Leathers, Tera J. Lee and Cheryl Wray.

Each year, SCWC honors a writer for being an encouragement to others. This year, David Bennett, editor of HomeLife and Open Windows through Lifeway Christian Resources, was honored with the 2024 Joanne Sloan National Award for the Encouragement of Writers.

### And the winners are ...

SCWC held an awards ceremony at the end of its conference.

In the newspaper article category, first place went to Audrey Bivins for “Girl math trend is teaching girls nonsense” in (Muhlenberg

County, Kentucky) Leader-News.

In the magazine article category, first place went to Mark Wainwright for “Once Upon a Time ...” in Journal for Christian Educators.

In the short story category, first place went to Carole Lehr Johnson for “The Light in the Mist” in Time Passages: A Collection of Diverse Short Stories.

In the poetry category, first place went to Linda Holloway for “If My Hair Could Talk” in The Journal of Poetry Therapy.

In the blog post category, first place went to Sandi Herron for “Homeward Bound.”

In the devotional category, first place went to Heather Lamm for “Turning Mourning into Dancing” in Christian Dance Hub Magazine.

Cheryl Wray, director of the SCWC, organizes the conference. Her parents, David and Joanne Sloan, founded it in 1991. The conference has since expanded to include regional workshops throughout the year and annual book awards.

## Persecuted church

### *Somali man attacked, child bullied after father announced faith in Jesus*

MOGADISHU, Somalia — A Somali man received serious injuries when his relatives attacked him for putting his faith in Jesus Christ.

The man’s wife has also left with their five children to live among Muslim family members.

Relatives of Mohammad Abdul, 40, attacked him May 5 at his home in the port city of Kisimayo, a source told Morning Star News.

After recovering from his injuries, Abdul moved to another city for safety.

Abdul had put his faith in Jesus Christ in March through the ministry efforts of a Somali pastor. Abdul and his family met with the pastor each evening to pray and study.

Some of Abdul’s children mentioned to other individuals that the family had been meeting

and praying with a pastor. After this information was disclosed, one of Abdul’s children was beaten and bullied by other children.

Abdul’s relatives also forcibly entered his home and attacked him with a knife for leaving Islam.

Morning Star, quoting the U.S. Department of State, says the constitution of Somalia establishes Islam as the state religion. Promotion of any other religion is prohibited.

Somalia is No. 2 on Open Doors’ 2024 World Watch List of places most difficult to be a Christian.



MS photo

### *Catholic farm worker dies after being tortured; family also threatened*

LAHORE, Pakistan — Police have declined to arrest the perpetrators in the torture death of a Catholic farm worker.

Shahid Masih, 35, died May 18, 10 days after his employers reportedly tortured him over 12 missing goats. Masih’s widow, Sonia Shahid, said the employers accused her husband and another Christian of the April goat thefts from the farm in the Bhikkhi area of Punjab Province, according to the news services Christian Daily International and Morning Star News.

She said at least seven assailants tied up her husband, beat and tortured him, and forced acid into his mouth. The assailants also held her family hostage and threatened her if she should implicate them in her husband’s death, she said.



Photo by Brittany Carter

# THRIVING ONCE AGAIN

## Alabaster church finding new life after replant from Chelsea congregation

By Tucker Massey  
The Alabama Baptist

Members of Southside Baptist Church in Alabaster are eagerly anticipating the reboot taking place within their congregation. Officially known as a replant, Southside is finding new life thanks to the willingness of Liberty Baptist Church in Chelsea to come alongside and help.

“There was a great spirit at the church (for the June 2 replant service),” said Ric Camp, who helped connect the churches through his role as lead mission strategist for Shelby Baptist Association.

The special service was the culmination of seven months of talks and congregational votes, Camp explained.

When Southside’s pastor retired in November, church members began to explore next steps.

Camp proposed the idea of a replant and sought out Liberty’s senior pastor Tim Cox to consider the partnership.

When Southside members agreed to the idea in December, leaders from the two churches took a few months to discuss the possibilities. Once Liberty announced a 94% affirmative vote in favor of the partnership, the Southside

congregation voted, and it was a unanimous yes.

Leon Burdette, executive pastor for Liberty, said he, Cox and executive associate pastor Kyle Valaer asked the Southside congregation difficult questions before presenting the proposal to deacons at Liberty and eventually the congregation.

“Right out of the gate, we were asking really difficult questions because we needed to find out [if] they were really serious,” Burdette said. “A lot of churches will say they need to [replant], but when you start fleshing it out, they’re like ‘Oh, never mind. We weren’t thinking that was going to happen.’”



Photo by Brittany Carter

Shelby Association’s Ric Camp (leading prayer) observed a “great spirit” among those gathered from both churches during the June 2 replant service.

However, Southside had no reservations about their desire to replant. They had no non-negotiables. They were willing to hand over all assets to Liberty to manage.

Camp noted the gratitude expressed from the Southside congregation. Several members assured the Liberty team that they were willing to make the changes needed to thrive again, he said.

Bryan Alderman will serve as Southside’s replant pastor. He has been in a role called serve pastor at Liberty.

Alderman shared how Liberty had launched a vision campaign

a few years ago that laid out the next decade for the church. In that campaign, Liberty envisioned helping other churches with revitalization efforts while also becoming a multi-site congregation, he said.

The thought of using ailing churches as potential new Liberty congregations also surfaced as part of the vision, but it proved difficult at first because it means the church needing help has to give up control, Alderman said.

“Over time, [our vision] morphed into, ‘OK, maybe we just need to be OK with partnering with another church just for the sake of seeing that church become all that it can be again,’” he said.

But Southside brought life into the vision that was stirred up at Liberty several years ago.

The end goal for this replant,

according to Alderman, is to make Southside a successful church in three technical areas: self-governance, self-sustenance and self-replication.

### Specific goals to achieve

Liberty leaders want Southside to eventually become fully reliant on its own internal leadership rather than Liberty’s and to be a gospel-advancing church that breathes life into the community. The goal also is for Southside to be able to stand on its own financially, utilize its own resources and then one day pour into other congregations like Liberty has poured into it.

Camp said he hopes to see Southside bear fruit for the Kingdom of God and act as a beacon for other churches that may need assistance from the association.



Photo by Brittany Carter

Members and friends of Southside Baptist Church in Alabaster celebrate the congregation’s launch service June 2. More than 80 people attended, which is more than double what the average attendance was for that congregation not even a year ago.

# Alabama news

## OBITUARIES

### JAMES RICHARD BEST

James Richard Best, a longtime Alabama Baptist pastor and associational director of missions, died June 13. He was 90.

A native of Texas, Best was licensed to preach in 1950. He earned a bachelor's degree from East Texas Baptist College (now university), Marshall, Texas; a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Seminary; and a doctor of ministry degree from Luther Rice Seminary, Lithonia, Georgia.

During his years of ministry, Best served as pastor of several churches in Alabama — Parkview Baptist, Decatur; Vestavia Hills Baptist, Decatur; and Riverview Baptist, Millers Ferry. He served as interim pastor of several others.

He was named associate pastor emeritus at Thomasville Baptist Church after serving as the church's associate pastor of ministry and missions from 2005 to 2010, just before his retirement. In the 1990s, Best served as director of missions for Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations. He also served as pastor of several churches in Texas and a church in Oregon.

Best was preceded in death by his wife of 60 years, Bobbie Benton. He is survived by his daughters, Teri and Daveta; son, Tim; six grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

### LOUIE F. REYNOLDS JR.

Louie F. Reynolds Jr., of Enterprise, died June 19. He was 92.

Reynolds was the director of religious education at Fort Rucker for more than 26 years. He also was pastor and interim pastor of several Baptist churches for more than 17 years, including his first full-time pastor role after seminary at Memorial Baptist Church, Citronelle.

He was a member of First Baptist Church New Brockton. He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean conflict and then earned a bachelor's degree from Howard College (now Samford University). He also held two master's degrees (religious education and divinity) from New Orleans Seminary.

He is survived by his wife, Annie Martz Reynolds of Enterprise; three sons, John, Mark and Philip; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.



BEST



REYNOLDS

### AUTAUGA ASSOCIATION

► **Prattmont Baptist Church, Prattville**, celebrated its 75th anniversary June 23. Mel Johnson, lead mission strategist for the association and chair of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, recognized the church for its 75 years of faithful service, and Anna Speir (left), a commissioner for the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, presented a commemorative plaque to Pete Chadwick (right), the pastor. Special offertory music was provided by Brooke Tucker, wife of Randall Tucker who served as pastor for 37 years until his death. Also recognized during the service were former pastor, Sid Nichols, and his wife, Pam; charter member Virginia Ballard Martinelli; and Dorothy Dennis, the oldest member. Past and present ministries of the church were shared by Justin Hall, a deacon, and Jay Penton, pastor of men's ministries.



Photo courtesy of Anna Speir

### BALDWIN ASSOCIATION

► **Josephine Baptist Church, Elberta**, celebrated its 50th anniversary June 23. Special music was provided by former member Roy Ellis. Highlights from the past were shared by church members David Lawrenz; Sherry Ballard Smith and her brother Robert Ballard; Mitch Nelson; and Rucker and Nettie Staggers. Special guests included former pastor Wil Baker and his wife, Mary Louise. During the service, a commemorative plaque was presented by Jim Lambert (right), a commissioner for the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, to Ted Mashburn (left), the pastor.



Photo courtesy of Leah Batchelder

### BIRMINGHAM METRO ASSOCIATION

► **The Church at GrantsMill, Irondale**, will host an old fashioned hymn sing, July 21, 4 p.m. Guest music groups are "The S.A.M. Vocal Band" and "The Hearts of Harmony." Steve Cleckler is pastor.

► **Trussville First Baptist Church** will host Oasis Birmingham with Frank Jones Ministries July 18 beginning at 1:30 p.m. featuring southern gospel group Karen Peck and New River. Also appearing will be The FBC Pickers, a gospel bluegrass group from First Baptist Guntersville. Pre-show entertainment begins at 1:15 p.m.

To order tickets, call 205-393-7020 or visit

frankjonesministries.org/oasis. Buddy Champion is pastor.

### BLOUNT ASSOCIATION

► **Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church** near Holly Pond will kick off its summer revival with a singing July 21 at 5 p.m. with The Kellys from Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. Revival services run July 22–26 at 10:30 a.m. (with lunch following) and 7 p.m. with a prayer band starting at 6:45. Dustin Smith is the evangelist. Earl Harper is pastor.

### CAREY ASSOCIATION

► **Darrell Hogan** is the new pastor of **County Line Baptist Church, Cragford**. He previously served as interim pastor of County Line and has served as young adult leader, worship leader, Sunday School director, missions leader and associate pastor in various churches. Hogan is the president of 4110 Ministries, an organization focused on evangelism. He holds a master of theology degree from Titus Baptist Seminary, LaGrange, Georgia, where he serves on the board of directors. He and his wife, Mindie, have four children and six grandchildren.



Photo courtesy of Donna Farrow

► **Ben Rosser** is the new pastor of **First Baptist Church Ashland**. Rosser previously served as pastor of Liberty Baptist Church, Ashland, was moderator for Carey Baptist Association, served as a trustee for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and was interim pastor for several churches. Rosser served as associate pastor of FBC Ashland as his first ministry position years ago. He holds a bachelor of theology degree from Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham (merged with Carolina University). He and his wife, Quita, have two adult sons and five grandchildren.



Photo courtesy of Ben Rosser

### COOSA RIVER ASSOCIATION

► **Jeremy Brown** is the new pastor of **Mignon Baptist Church, Sylacauga**. He previously served as a worship pastor, student minister and children's minister. Brown holds a bachelor of arts degree in Christian studies from the University of Mobile, and a master of divinity degree from



BROWN

**NEWS**

Beeson Divinity School, Samford University. He and his wife, LaShelia, have two children.

► **Dan Seaborn** is the new worship pastor of **First Baptist Church Sylacauga**. A member of the church's praise band since 2017, Seaborn works full time as the band director for



**SEABORN**

B.B. Comer High School, Sylacauga, where he has taught for 24 years. Seaborn directs the school's "Marching Sound of Gold," jazz ensemble and beginning band. He serves as the current treasurer and past president of the Talladega County Band Directors Association and directs the Heritage Hall Jazz Band, a community jazz ensemble based out of Talladega. Seaborn also taught band at Sulligent High School in Lamar County. He holds a bachelor of music education degree from Troy University. He and his wife, Christy, have two children. Rick Patrick is pastor.

**ELMORE ASSOCIATION**

► **Brandon Wilemon** is the new pastor of **Crossroads Community Church, Elmore**. He steps into the role from the associate pastor of discipleship and students position at



**WILEMON**

Crossroads. He previously served in associate pastor roles at Centerpoint Fellowship Church, Wetumpka, and Journey Church, Millbrook, and in Mississippi. Wilemon holds a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership from Union University, Jackson, Tennessee; and a master of arts degree in ministry from Temple Baptist Theological Seminary, Mount Vernon, Georgia. He and his wife, Carla, have three children.

**ETOWAH ASSOCIATION**

► **Tommy Ferguson** celebrated 30 years as pastor of **Goodyear Heights Baptist Church, Gadsden**. The special service included Ferguson's uncle Herbert Thomas as guest preacher, former worship leader Greg Rutherford as guest music director and Ferguson's sisters Carol Bonds and Janice Marcum providing special music. Etowah Baptist Association's director of missions Craig Carlisle, along with family and friends, also shared during the service.



Photo courtesy of Tony Wood

**MONTGOMERY ASSOCIATION**

► **Tim Head** is the new worship pastor for **Dalraida Baptist Church, Montgomery**. Previously, he served as interim worship



**HEAD**

pastor for Wetumpka First Baptist Church. Head also has served as associate pastor, worship pastor and pastor of administration for several churches in the Montgomery area. In 2008, he was ordained to the gospel ministry by Eastmont Baptist Church, Montgomery. He and his wife, Jennifer, have three children. Tommy Fike is pastor.

► **Rick Marshall**, former pastor of **Eastern Hills Baptist Church, Montgomery**, was named pastor emeritus of the church in June. Marshall served as pastor of Eastern Hills from 1994 to 2017, the year he retired from a 45-year ministry career where he served as pastor of four churches during those years. He and his wife, Judy, have remained members of Eastern Hills.



**MARSHALL**

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Please send news items to news@thealabamabaptist.org. Submissions that include the following information are greatly appreciated:*

- complete details of the event or honor;
- at least one high resolution photo;
- the name and phone number of a contact person.

# Riverside Baptist burns after fatal one-car crash; second fatal crash at church happens a few days later

Days after Riverside Baptist Church near Pell City in St. Clair County was reduced to rubble following a fiery car crash that killed the driver, a woman reported to be the deceased man's girlfriend died in a similar crash.

Initially, Riverside officials responded to a fire at the church June 20. The church's brick walls were all that were left after officials put out the fire.

News outlets later identified the driver as 19-year-old Anthony Banks Jr. Officials believed Banks had crashed into the church's basement after leaving the roadway.

**The Church is the people**

The night before, pastor Ken Maddox had taught a lesson at Wednesday night Bible study called, "Where is Your Church?" They talked about how the Church isn't brick and mortar; it is the people.

And a little after midnight June 23, Jennefer L. Arellano-Maldonado, 19, crashed into a brick wall of the destroyed church.

Her car also caught on fire, and she died on the scene. Officials said Arellano-Maldonado

allegedly was driving a stolen car. An Alabama Law Enforcement Agency official told local news outlets that she was attempting to evade police when the crash happened.

WBRC-13 reported that Arellano-Maldonado was Banks' girlfriend.

The congregation plans to meet temporarily for worship at the storm shelter behind Riverside City Hall.

Danny Courson, who serves as associational mission strategist for St. Clair Baptist Association, said church leaders plan to rebuild but are currently in conversations with their insurance provider about next steps.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said, "We are praying for the Riverside Church family as they deal with this sad situation.

"The State Board of Missions will do everything we can to assist the church family during this critical time," he said. "We are grateful to the

Alabama Baptist family for making this possible."

Mark Wakefield, SBOM's disaster relief strategist, delivered a check to the church on behalf of Alabama Baptists and visited with

the pastor and other church members at the site following the initial crash.

They told him that while they were sad about the building, they were grateful to be able to continue gathering together.

"While we were there, the grandparents of the young man driving the car also came up," Wakefield said. "Ken was trying to

spend some time with them and love on them.

"There are not many things like standing in the dark and seeing those flames raging through everything; it's a pretty tough feeling for folks," Wakefield noted. "I just wanted to let them know the rest of their Alabama Baptist family was praying for them." (TAB Media)



Facebook photo from Tim Gold

# 5 guidelines for communicating during an election year

By **Mark MacDonald**  
The Alabama Baptist

Another election year is here. And since all elections should be a critical decision point for everyone, the Church needs to tackle our discourse, as politics impacts all of our lives.

Elections have consequences for the community and your congregation. Therefore, our churches need to contribute prayerful guidance leading up to elections but with cautionary communication fences.

## Helpful tips

Here are 5 tips for communicating biblically in an election year:

**1. Keep the gospel the main thing.** Amid political tensions, prioritize the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 15:1–2, Paul underscores the gospel's importance because it brings eternal

salvation. Regardless of political affiliations, Romans 1:16 also emphasizes the power of the gospel. Members of the early Church (Acts 5:42) steadfastly proclaimed Jesus despite opposition. Maintain focus on the gospel in all your communication and channels, guided by 2 Timothy 4:2. By keeping the gospel central, you offer hope and transformation to all. This is far more important than temporal politics which can be a barrier.

**2. Preach the Bible practically, not politically.** During political ambiguity, offer your church audiences a biblical perspective on relevant issues. Speak truth, not opinion. Psalm 119:105 declares, “Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” Ground your church and personal communication in the timeless truths of Scripture, helping



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your congregation discern how to apply God's principles to contemporary political policy. Give guidance on how to prioritize biblical values in their decision-making process and consider how to do this across all your communication channels (e.g. social media, stage, website, etc.).

**3. Emphasize unity amid diversity.** In times of political polarization, it's easy

for divisions to arise within congregations. However, as followers of Christ, we are called to gospel unity despite our differences.

Ephesians 4:3 reminds us to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” Encourage your congregation to prioritize love and understanding over political disagreements. Remind them that our common faith

in Christ transcends any political affiliation.

**4. Create rules for respectful dialogue.** Encourage open and respectful dialogue within your congregation, where differing viewpoints are acknowledged and valued. Proverbs 18:13 advises, “To answer before listening — that is folly and shame.” Encourage active listening and empathy, reminding your congregation that everyone's perspective should be heard and respected. Model this behavior in your own interactions, demonstrating humility and a willingness to learn from others.

**5. Lead by example.** As a church communicator, your words and actions carry significant weight within your congregation (Titus 2:7–8). Encourage everyone to pray for all leaders of our country and be a person of prayer yourself.

## Faith Moments

### 9 questions for a mid-year spiritual checkup

I can't believe it. July is here. Where has this first half of the year gone? I recently completed the mid-year reviews for the office of evangelism and church revitalization. One way we ensure we stay on target at the State Board of Missions is to evaluate regularly.

On a personal note, it is healthy for you and me to examine our lives and ministry as well with a spiritual checkup.

#### Mid-year evaluation

**1. Have you been consistent with your daily quiet times?** Are you following through with your daily Bible reading plan? Have you been in the Word each day? —Jeremiah 15:16

**2. How is your daily prayer time?** Are you spending quality

time talking with God in prayer? Or are you hurriedly saying prayers? —Mark 1:35

**3. What Scripture have you memorized in the last six months?** Have you been effective in “hiding God's Word in your heart?” —Psalm 119:11

**4. Have you been taking time with your family?** Your family needs regular, undivided attention from you whether nearby or far away. Are you praying and laboring so they might love Christ more and more every day? —Deuteronomy 4:6–9

**5. How consistent have you been with an exercise program?** Your body is the temple of the living God. Are you keeping this temple in good shape (physically and spiritually)? —1 Corinthians 6:19–20

**6. How have you been with the battle of the mind?** Temptation is real. Have you experienced victory over sin this year? Do you need to repent? Do you have an accountability partner? —James 1:14–15

**7. Who has come to faith recently because you shared Christ?** How often have you shared the gospel with unbelievers these past six months? —Acts 1:8

**8. How effective have you been in cultivating your godly friendships?** Remember, as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. We are never too old (or young) to expand our godly friend group. —Proverbs 27:17

**9. How effective does your family (and friends) think you have been as a Christian these past six months?** Have people seen you as a godly role model? Or have they

seen you as negative, gossipy, someone who does not exemplify a Christian in words and deeds? —Galatians 5:22–23

#### Motivation for second half of the year

This mid-year review is not designed to discourage you. All of us fall short.

However, I pray that taking time to think about these areas serves as motivation to finish the second part of this year well. Reading these nine questions has shown me areas I need to improve as I complete 2024 (the Lord willing).

I want to finish well. How about you?

By **Rob Jackson**  
Director of evangelism and church revitalization, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions



# ‘The Lord’s plan for us’

## Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program provides life-giving option to families

(continued from page 1) of Nightlight Christian Adoptions, has been offering embryo adoption since 1997.

“We were the first agency ever to offer embryo adoption,” said Beth Button, executive director of Snowflakes. “We pioneered the concept. If people don’t want to keep paying for frozen storage and they’re not comfortable destroying the embryos, then why not donate them to another couple?”

The organization, she said, seeks to provide a life-giving option to couples who have completed their families but have embryos remaining after IVF. It also provides

couples dealing with infertility another possibility for fulfilling their dream of having a baby.

Once the Millers decided to go with embryo adoption, they found the process to be relatively simple when compared to a traditional adoption.

“Unlike a traditional adoption, embryo adoption is done by contract, so there were no big legal hurdles to cross,” Rodney said. “Snowflakes required a home

study, background checks and financial reports, and we provided information that

helped Snowflakes statistically determine how many embryos we should adopt and which embryos they should match to us.”

Potential matches are reviewed by both the placing and adopting families with identifying information redacted. Once

both families approve the match and the paperwork is completed, the adoptive

parents can proceed with the IVF transfer.

### Parental connections

On Dec. 23, 2022, the Millers — parents-in-waiting by then for a decade — became the parents of twins Dalton and Mary Elizabeth.

The couple who donated the embryos are watching the Miller children grow from a distance. According to an agreement between the families, the Millers provide updates on and photos of the twins to the placing couple.

Such openness between the families is strongly encouraged by Snowflakes.

“They may never meet in person,” Button explained,

“but we expect them to have some type of communication at least once a year and for the adoptive parents to share updates. It’s important for the placing parents to have that peace of mind, especially if they consider these embryos to be lives and children who were potentially

going to join their family at one time.”

Placing parents also receive updates when a child is born or when an embryo is thawed and doesn’t survive the thawing process.

The Millers are strong advocates for embryo adoption. “Our journey brought us closer together and closer to the Lord,” Mary Leah said. “There are thousands

of embryos out there that were created for a purpose and need a chance at life.”

Rodney wholeheartedly agreed. “We are convinced that embryo adoption was the Lord’s plan for us.”

And now the Millers’ double dose of joy is about to double

again, having recently learned that Mary Leah is pregnant with a second set of twins.

“We originally adopted five embryos and transferred two the first time and two back in February,” Rodney said. “We’ll soon have four kids under the age of 2.”



Photo courtesy of Liz Allison Photography  
Rodney Miller is pictured with Mary Elizabeth.



Photo courtesy of Liz Allison Photography  
Mary Leah Miller is pictured with Dalton.

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# Alzheimer's Disease Task Force enhancing resources

By Alexander Willis  
Alabama Daily News

The Alabama Alzheimer's Disease Task Force made progress recently in its effort to develop and implement a new state plan to target dementia, this time with a new pool of federal funding at its disposal.

"The reason why we're all here is because of Alzheimer's, which is certainly an issue that affects our state now and will more so in the future," said Rep. Ginny Shaver, R-Leesburg, the chair of the task force.

## Federal funding

The new pool of federal funding comes courtesy of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through its BOLD grant, with \$1.7 million awarded to the Alabama Department of Public Health in 2023 to be paid out over a five-year period.

Dementia is a term that refers to a group of symptoms that induce memory loss and confusion.

Alzheimer's disease is the most

common form of dementia and causes brain cells and their connectors to degenerate and die, causing the loss of memory and certain cognitive abilities.

Nearly 7 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's, and it's the fifth leading cause of death in the country.

In 2022, 2,655 Alabamians died from Alzheimer's, giving the state the second-highest Alzheimer's death rate in the U.S., behind only Mississippi.

As of 2020, more than 103,000 Alabamians were estimated to suffer from Alzheimer's.

"My 68-year-old sister suffers from dementia, and I take care of her, so this is a personal issue for me," Shaver told ADN.

"I can tell you first hand that it is quite taxing on caregivers, and I'm probably more connected than most people in seeking out services and finding out what's available as far as health care and other services for someone with dementia."

When asked what she considered to be the largest blindspot for

dementia-related care in Alabama, Shaver said it was awareness.

"The biggest thing that I see is people just don't know where to go, who to reach out to to try to reach services," she told ADN.

## Awareness important

"Not everyone is computer literate, they don't know who to call, so I see that as number one: public education and letting the people know where to go to get help."

Task force members voted to appoint the chairs of several subcommittees, each focusing on six focus areas: caregiver support and education; access to services and resources; public awareness and stigma reduction; health care provider training and education; research and innovation; and policy and advocacy.

Members also finalized a schedule for each subcommittee to finalize their strategy recommendations for each focus area, with plans for the task force to finalize their recommendations in January 2025.

"We have currently around 100,000 Alabamians who suffer from Alzheimer's or some other form of dementia, and that rate is increasing at almost 15%," Shaver said. "The needs are currently great, but they are growing."

The Alzheimer's Disease Task Force was established in part by Shaver after she was approached by the Alzheimer's Association, who encouraged the development of a new state plan to improve resources for those with dementia.

An identically named task force was established back in 2012, the members of which ultimately developed a state plan to target dementia needs in the state through 2015.

With that plan now a decade old and cases of dementia and dementia-related deaths rising in Alabama, the new task force is expected to submit its recommendations to lawmakers for a new state plan by the fifth legislative day of the 2025 legislative session in mid-February.

*EDITOR'S NOTE — This story is reprinted with permission.*

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# HELPING THE VULNERABLE

## Many elderly, disabled adults in need of foster care across state of Alabama

Alabama's elderly and disabled adults can often find themselves in more vulnerable circumstances and in need of special care. The Alabama Department of Human Resources is helping by finding adult foster homes to assist older adults who may have trouble caring for themselves.

Adult foster care helps those elderly and disabled adults stay in family-style homes instead of institutional settings when relocation is necessary to provide them round-the-clock care.

### Neglect on the rise

In Fiscal Year 2023, Alabama DHR received more than 12,000 reports of elder abuse or neglect. That's an increase of 125%

since 2013. With the help of qualified and capable adult foster homes, many of these cases could be avoided. DHR's goal is to recruit at least one adult foster home in each of Alabama's 67 counties.

### 'Life-changing'

"The rise in elder abuse and neglect over the last decade has been disheartening, but we have also seen so many individuals step up to provide loving, caring homes for many of Alabama's aging individuals," said Alabama DHR Commissioner Nancy Buckner.

"Becoming an adult foster care provider is both helpful for the adult in need and incredibly rewarding for the person opening their home," she noted. "The need for these extraordinary



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individuals is growing every day, and I believe there are many more Alabamians who are ready to step up and help."

The Adult Foster Care program serves adults who can live safely in a home environment but may need

assistance with daily life.

"We are proud to partner with DHR to find the absolute best services and care for seniors in need," said Alabama Department of Senior Services Commissioner Jean Brown. "Adult Foster Care is a life-changing experience for everyone involved and can brighten the lives of some of Alabama's most vulnerable residents."

Beth Nelson is an adult foster care provider in Elmore County. She said being an adult foster home provider has made her life richer and considers her experience a blessing.

"I've had an adult foster in my home for nearly 16 years, and it has enriched both of our lives," Nelson said. "I don't know what would have happened to him had I not taken him in back then. We've become family and do everything together."

Gov. Kay Ivey proclaimed June 15, 2024, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Alabama to raise awareness and hopefully encourage anyone thinking of opening their home to take that next step.

Those interested in becoming adult foster care providers are encouraged to contact their county DHR office. More information, including eligibility requirements, is available at [dhr.alabama.gov/AFC](http://dhr.alabama.gov/AFC).

DHR also reminds the public to report suspected adult abuse, neglect and exploitation by calling the Adult Abuse Hotline at 800-458-7214, emailing [aps@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:aps@dhr.alabama.gov) or contacting a county DHR office.

### Signs to look for

Warning signs include:

- ▶ Increased fear or anxiety.
- ▶ Isolation from friends or family.
- ▶ Withdrawal from normal activities.
- ▶ Unusual changes in behavior or sleep.
- ▶ Unexplained injuries, bruises, cuts or sores.
- ▶ Unsanitary living conditions and poor hygiene.
- ▶ Unusual or sudden changes in financial spending patterns, wills or other important documents.

**To report suspected adult abuse, neglect and exploitation by calling the Adult Abuse Hotline at 1-800-458-7214, emailing [aps@dhr.alabama.gov](mailto:aps@dhr.alabama.gov) or contacting a county DHR office.**

*EDITOR'S NOTE — This news release was provided by the State of Alabama Department of Human Resources.*

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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# ESL workshops this summer

**K**risty Kennedy says many of the internationals who live in Alabama have never had their own Bible, and many have never heard of Jesus specifically. A great way to connect with them is to get involved in English, she said.

“For me personally and my experience, ESL ministries are one of the best ways to reach internationals with the gospel,” said Kennedy, who leads in the area of community ministries at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

A first step toward getting involved is to attend an ESL workshop this summer:

► FBC Tuscaloosa from 1 p.m. July 26 to 4 p.m. July 27.

► Westwood Baptist Church in Alabaster from 1 p.m. Aug. 16 to 4 p.m. Aug. 17.

To register, visit [alsbom.org/esl](http://alsbom.org/esl) or scan the code below with your smartphone's camera.



At the workshop, you'll learn the skills to run an ESL ministry — starting and organizing, recruiting students and teachers, how to teach, how to prepare a lesson plan, how to share your faith with your students and more.

The cost is \$25 and includes materials, dinner Friday and lunch Saturday.

To register, visit [alsbom.org/esl](http://alsbom.org/esl).

## 2024-25 Resource Directories Now Available

It's time to order your 2024-25 Resource Directory! This 16-month calendar has State Board of Missions events and emphases already printed with plenty of room for you to add your church's events. It also includes an alphabetical listing of minis-

tries and services along with directories of associational, state and SBC contacts.

Order yours by visiting [alsbom.org/rd](http://alsbom.org/rd) or contacting Melissa Tolar at 334-613-2249 or [mtolar@alsbom.org](mailto:mtolar@alsbom.org). Please limit to 20 copies per church.

## Renew. Recharge. Refresh.

That's the theme of this year's Youth Minister Retreat, set for Aug. 26-27 at WorldSong Missions Place in Cook Springs.

This retreat will be an opportunity to connect

with student pastors from all over the state to be renewed, recharged and refreshed to do the work of the ministry.

The cost is \$40. To register, visit [ymlink.org/calendar](http://ymlink.org/calendar).

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### CHURCH POSITIONS

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Pinckard Baptist Church, Pinckard, Alabama, seeking full-time or bivocational pastor. Send resumé to: [mark.b.ivey@gmail.com](mailto:mark.b.ivey@gmail.com).

#### PASTOR

**BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR**  
Northside Baptist Church, Selma, Alabama, is seeking a bivocational pastor. Please submit resumé to: [Northsidebaptist2021@gmail.com](mailto:Northsidebaptist2021@gmail.com).

#### BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR

Fairview Baptist in Samson, Alabama, is seeking a bivocational pastor. Please email resúmes to: [fairviewbaptist.samson.al@outlook.com](mailto:fairviewbaptist.samson.al@outlook.com) or via USPS to: 3159 N State Highway 87, Samson, AL 36477.

#### ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Community Baptist Ardmore, Alabama, seeking associate pastor. Link to upload resumé: <http://cbcarmore.org/staffsearch>.

#### ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR MUSIC MINISTRY

FBC of West Memphis, Arkansas, is actively seeking a candidate to fill the position of associate pastor for music ministry. We are seeking a theologically sound, competent musician, who will use his talents to serve our multi-generational congregation and culturally diverse community. Please submit resúmes to: [firstbaptistwmsearch@gmail.com](mailto:firstbaptistwmsearch@gmail.com).

#### PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC

First Baptist Church, Rogersville, Alabama, is seeking a part-time minister of music for blended services, directing choir, congregation and coordinating volunteer musicians. Request all interested candidates submit resúmes to: [tiedeinal@aol.com](mailto:tiedeinal@aol.com).

#### BIVOCATIONAL WORSHIP LEADER/DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

New Market Baptist Church, NE, Madison County, Alabama, is seeking a bivocational worship leader/director of music. Request all interested candidates submit resúmes to: [newmarketbaptistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:newmarketbaptistchurch@gmail.com).

#### PASTOR OF STUDENTS AND EDUCATION

Pine Grove Baptist Church is seeking applicants for the position of pastor of students and education. This is a full-time position. Experience in this

position is preferred but not required. Applicants should be enrolled in or have completed a program of higher theological education. Please send resúmes to: [dgreen@pinegrovebc.org](mailto:dgreen@pinegrovebc.org). Applicants may contact the church office during normal business hours at 256-927-3214 for more information. Timeframe: June 1-July 31.

#### PART-TIME MINISTER OF STUDENTS

Bethlehem Baptist Church, Lacey's Spring. This position would have oversight and responsibility from K-12th grade students. Send resúmes or request more information by email to: [BethlehemLacey@gmail.com](mailto:BethlehemLacey@gmail.com).

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#### HOSTED CHURCH

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#### SAMFORD MTI

The Ministry Training Institute at Samford University exists to equip Christians to be leaders in their churches and communities through theological education and practical ministry training. Education opportunities exist through the institute's vast extension network and robust online certificate curriculum. Find more information at [samford.edu/programs/ministry-training-institute](http://samford.edu/programs/ministry-training-institute).

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Know someone who's visually impaired and finds it difficult to read? The Alabama Baptist offers a way for that person to listen to stories and news in a format that comes in the mail for free. For more information, call 205-870-4720 or email [ahacker@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:ahacker@thealabamabaptist.org).

#### THE WELLNESS KITCHEN

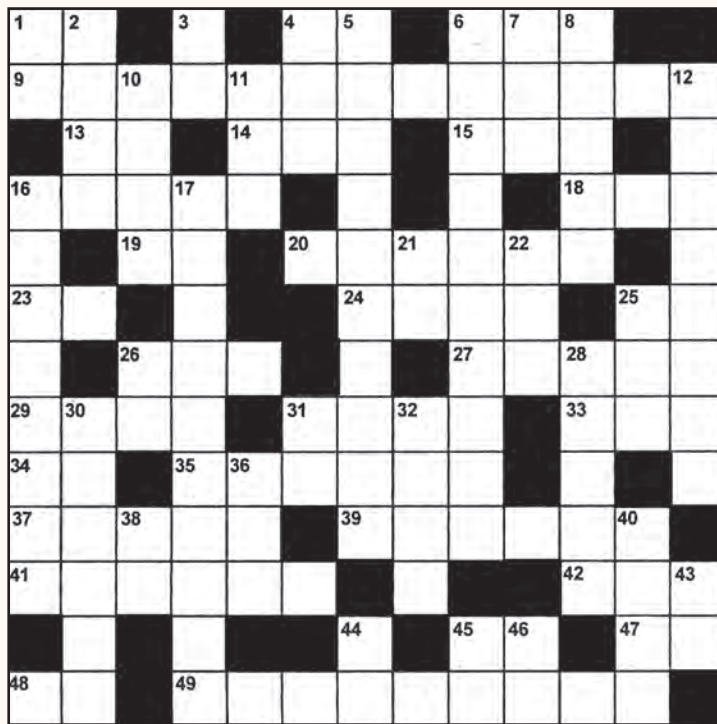
The Wellness Kitchen is a blog and e-newsletter focused on healthy living, ingredients and recipes. The Wellness Kitchen was started by Pat Terry, a registered dietitian and nutrition professor at Samford University for 30 years. Visit her website at [thewellnesskitchenrd.com](http://thewellnesskitchenrd.com) to read more and subscribe to her monthly e-newsletter.

# CHRISTIAN Crossword



**ACROSS**

- 1. I \_\_\_\_\_. (name of God)
- 4. Father.
- 6. A deity or idol.
- 9. Fruit of the Spirit. (Gal. 5:22)
- 13. Satan went \_\_\_\_ and fro. (Job 1:7)
- 14. Small, humanlike mythical being.
- 15. Prefix of negation.
- 16. \_\_\_\_ from God the Father. (Gal. 1:3)
- 18. Moses' second book. (abbr.)
- 19. \_\_\_\_, every one that thirsteth. (Isa. 55:1)
- 20. \_\_\_\_ fell from Saul's eyes. (Acts 9:18)
- 23. Peter wrote \_\_\_\_ the scattered Jews. (1 Pet. 1:1)
- 24. I will ... have mercy on \_\_\_\_\_. (Jer. 33:26)
- 25. Indefinite singular article.
- 26. Hiram's navy brought this animal to Solomon. (1 Kings 10:22)
- 27. Traveled with Rebekah. (Gen. 24:59)
- 29. Ancient city.
- 31. The Spirit descended in this form. (Matt. 3:16)
- 33. This animal spoke to Balaam. (Num. 22:28)
- 34. In him is \_\_\_\_ darkness. (1 John 1:5)
- 35. Used to kill Stephen. (Acts 7:58)
- 37. Pilate found no \_\_\_\_ of death in Jesus. (Luke 23:22)
- 39. Relationship of Martha and Mary to Lazarus. (John 11:1)
- 41. \_\_\_\_ his money. (Gen. 42:27)



By David Greenlee Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

- 42. Built the ark. (Luke 17:27)
- 45. Peleth's son. (Num. 16:1)
- 47. Year of the Lord. (Latin abbr.)
- 48. Ye shall be \_\_\_\_ gods. (Gen. 3:5)
- 49. Love thy \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 5:43)
- 42. Built the ark. (Gal. 5:22)
- 16. Sound in faith, charity and \_\_\_\_\_. (Titus 2:2)
- 17. Jesus was moved with \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt. 9:36)
- 21. \_\_\_\_, Lord God! (Jer. 4:10)
- 22. Ostrichlike bird.
- 25. Donkey.
- 26. Alabama. (abbr.)
- 28. Brought food to Elijah. (1 Kings 17:6)
- 30. My soul \_\_\_\_ in the Lord. (Ps. 34:2)
- 31. It is lawful to \_\_\_\_ well. (Matt. 12:12)
- 32. Rebekah's face covering. (Gen. 24:65, modern spelling)
- 36. Golf ball supporter.
- 38. Opposite of down.
- 40. Lion's call. (1 Pet. 5:8)
- 43. Name of an altar. (Josh. 22:34)
- 44. See 3 down.
- 45. 21-verse prophet. (abbr.)
- 46. If we say we have \_\_\_\_ sin. (1 John 1:8)

All Bible verses are KJV unless otherwise specified.

## State Missions planning materials on the way!

Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering planning guides and sample packets have been mailed to every Alabama Baptist church.

The packets include a sample prayer guide, poster, offering envelope

and missions study; information about the offering itself, including how your 2023 gifts continue to make a difference in a variety of

ways; a planning guide with suggestions about how best to use the materials; and an order form to request free materials for the offering and the Week of Prayer for State Missions (which is Sept. 8-15, so mark your calendar!).

Remember also to visit Myers-Mallory.org to access downloadable print and video resources, along with clip art and social media icons.



## Children's Music Summit

It's back — a hands-on training event for preschool and children's music leadership to get you excited about teaching these precious children about God through music!

The Children's Music Summit offers exciting training for children's choir workers and day-care workers. Discover new ways to make music time a favorite

for kids, and watch the love for worship come alive in your preschoolers and children! You'll also learn to use games and toys to add more fun to your music time.

The Children's Music Summit will be Aug. 10, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hunter Street Baptist Church in Hoover. For more information or to register, visit alabamaworship.org/events.

## Senior Adult Leadership Training

Want to be more effective involving senior adults in your church and reaching those in your community? The Senior Adult Leadership Training can provide basic ways to expand the scope of your church's senior adult ministry. Senior adult ministers and lay leaders are invited.

SALT offers two dates and locations — Aug. 20 at

Northbrook Baptist Church in Cullman and Aug. 22 at Evergreen Baptist Church, both from 9:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Both events are free, but registration is required for the included boxed lunch.

To register, visit alsbom.org/salt or for more information, contact State Missionary Frank Jones, fjones@alsbom.org, 334-613-2221.

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## Sunday School Lessons

By Jay T. Robertson, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, University of Mobile



### For July 14

#### WORTHY Acts 5:29–42

The apostles experienced power to perform miracles, great boldness in preaching and God's presence in their lives, yet they were not exempt from hatred and persecution. They were arrested, put in jail, beaten and slandered by community leaders. Faith in God does not make troubles disappear; it makes troubles appear less frightening because it puts them in the right perspective. The apostles rejoiced that they had been counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus, and they didn't stop proclaiming the gospel.

#### Angry Response (29–33)

After being warned by the Sanhedrin not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus, the apostles didn't retreat at all. They continued to proclaim the gospel and were arrested again. The Sanhedrin was especially angry because the apostles disobeyed its clear command not to speak the name of Jesus and because the apostles laid the guilt for Jesus' death on its leaders.

When confronted by the high priest and members of the Sanhedrin, Peter replied, "We must obey God rather than people." Peter seized the opportunity of the moment to witness to the religious leaders once again. He said they all were responsible for putting Jesus to death, but the God of their ancestors, whom they claimed to worship, raised Jesus back to life and exalted Him to His right hand as Ruler and Savior. It is because of what God has accomplished in Jesus that repentance and forgiveness of sins can be proclaimed to Israel. When they heard this they were "enraged" and wanted to kill the apostles.

#### Wise Counsel (34–39)

As the members of the Sanhedrin prepared to attack the

apostles, Gamaliel, a highly respected Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin, ordered that the apostles be taken outside for a while. Gamaliel urged the Sanhedrin not to act like an unruly mob but to consider carefully how they would respond to the claims of the apostles.

Gamaliel referenced two familiar incidents of which they would all be aware. He reminded them of an insurrection led by Theudas and one led by Judas the Galilean. When the leaders were killed, both insurrections came to nothing.

Gamaliel believed that nothing good would come from their continued opposition to the apostles. He strongly warned the Sanhedrin to leave them alone. As with Theudas and Judas, if their work were merely human in origin, it would fail. The leaders did not need to risk attracting the attention of the Romans or the Jewish people who had seen the miracles.

On the other hand, if their work was of God, the leaders would not be able to stop it no matter how hard they tried, and they could discover they were actually fighting against God Himself. The Sanhedrin accepted his counsel and did not have them executed.

#### Grateful Suffering (40–42)

After calling the apostles back into the council, they ordered that the apostles be flogged in accordance with Jewish law (Deut. 25:2–3). Then the Sanhedrin commanded the apostles once again not to speak in the name of Jesus. They were to cease and desist immediately from preaching about Jesus and His resurrection.

The apostles went out from the Sanhedrin rejoicing that they had been counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus. They had not compromised the truth. They demonstrated their faith in Christ by their faithfulness to Christ, even in the face of persecution.

### For July 21

#### SERVING Acts 6:1–15

Wonderful things were happening as God grew the Church by leaps and bounds. Thousands of people had been saved and added to the Church as the gospel was proclaimed.

In our verses this week, we learn that Satan was unhappy about God's successes, so he sowed a spirit of murmuring and gossip among God's people, hoping to set believer against believer. But the wisdom of God prevailed and the gospel continued to spread despite the opposition.

#### Opportunity Knocks (1–4)

God was building His Church from the fields white unto harvest among Jews gathered in Jerusalem from around the world. Two unique types of Jews were being saved. The Hellenistic Jews were from many different countries and primarily spoke Greek. The Hebraic Jews were native to Judea and primarily spoke Aramaic.

As the Jerusalem church continued to grow, it became more difficult to minister equitably to all the widows under its care. Disparity developed in the daily distribution of food to the Hellenistic widows and the Hebraic widows, resulting in complaints.

The situation boiled up until it reached the Twelve Apostles, who knew this problem had to be nipped in the bud immediately. They gathered the disciples together and reminded them that they needed to focus on the preaching of the Word of God. They were called to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). Everything we do as the Church should flow from a Word-centered ministry.

The Twelve told the other disciples to pick from among themselves seven men with a good reputation who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom so they could appoint those men to care for the widows who had been overlooked. This was a great opportunity to enlist faithful church

members to step up and help solve a critical problem besetting the early Church.

#### Influence Expands (5–7)

The proposal pleased them, and the members of the church chose seven men who met the qualifications determined by the apostles. Each of the seven men had Greek names, meaning these were Hellenistic men who would oversee the food distribution to the Hellenistic widows. This wise move demonstrated respect and trust and strengthened the unity of the Church. The apostles prayed for the men and commissioned them for service by laying hands on them.

The church was blessed by the resolution of the conflict and the multiplication of members meeting others' needs. The Word of God spread as the apostles were enabled to devote themselves to prayer and the preaching of the gospel. The Lord added many new believers to the church in Jerusalem, and even a large number of the priests were saved. Serving others leads to greater Kingdom work.

#### Opposition Surfaces (8–15)

Stephen, one of the seven men selected, was performing miracles, and the people were impacted.

As Stephen witnessed for Christ at the Freedmen's Synagogue in Jerusalem, the Hellenistic Jews of this synagogue opposed his witness. Although they began to argue with him, they could not stand up to his wisdom and his Spirit-empowered explanation of the Scripture.

The synagogue members convinced some men to give false testimony against Stephen. These false witnesses stirred the crowd up into a frenzy and then dragged Stephen to the Sanhedrin to face formal charges.

Throughout all of the false testimony, Stephen was strengthened by God's grace. His calm demeanor had a great impact on a man named Saul.

# BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Sunday School Lessons

Executive Director, Ministry Training Institute/Assistant to the President for Church Relations, Samford University

By Kevin Blackwell, Ph.D.



### For July 14

#### **GOD'S PROMISE OF A NEW COVENANT** Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:14-20

Referring to God as “Father” may not sit well with some people. Sometimes people have a negative view of their earthly fathers. Whether a father is present but not seeking the Lord or he is absent and not a part of his children’s lives at all, people have valid reasons to pause when they hear God referred to as “Father.”

However, if we can see that “God the Father” should not be a projection of our earthly fathers onto God but rather the image of the perfect father, perhaps this term wouldn’t cause people angst and concern. God the Father keeps His promises and cares deeply for His children.

#### **God will establish a new covenant unlike previous covenants. (Jer. 31:31-32)**

God has always kept His side of the covenant. However, the Israelites failed time and time again while God remained steadfast. God never gave up on His people even though they failed Him over and over. This passage gives us a beautiful image of a father who loves unconditionally.

While the Israelites broke their promises and didn’t uphold their part of the covenant between them and God, God remained faithful. Even though the Israelites were unworthy of God’s favor, He vowed to make a new covenant with them because they broke the old one. God is the example of what a good father should be. He loves unconditionally and never gives up on His children.

#### **Under the new covenant, we will live in forgiveness, fully committed to God in heart and mind. (33-34)**

From the beginning — as far back as the Garden of Eden — God has desired a relationship with His people and has shown

His love for us in various ways. There was no fathomable reason for God to desire this relationship other than the fact that He loves us unconditionally. There was nothing we could offer God that He didn’t already possess. There is nothing we can do for God that He can’t do for Himself.

Out of love, God created man and woman and allowed them to live with Him in a garden. Out of love, He delivered them from the flood on an ark.

Out of love, He made a covenant with Abraham to make him into a great nation. Out of love, He brought them out of slavery in Egypt and into the promised land. And out of love, God gave them a king. Yet the people of Israel still didn’t see how much God loved them.

#### **When we trust in the completed work of Christ, we enter into the new covenant with Him. (Luke 22:14-20)**

Like a great crescendo, all the times when God showed love for His people led to the events of the night when Jesus was betrayed. Beginning with the Last Supper as recorded in Luke, Jesus foretold His ultimate act of love for God’s children — His death. And through Jesus’ death, the new covenant would be established. Sin would be forgiven, and the relationship would be restored through God’s only Son, Jesus.

Everything before and everything after that night would point to Jesus — God’s ultimate way of showing His people love and restoring the relationship severed by sin.



*This lesson was written by Bryan D. Gill, D.Min., Director of the Office of Faith, Learning and Vocation at Samford University.*

### For July 21

#### **AARON AND HUR** Exodus 17:8-13; 24:13-15

Exodus 17 records a challenging time of leadership for Moses.

In the first seven verses, Moses was fighting a battle of thirst as the people of God found themselves in Rephidim without clean water to drink. God instructed Moses to take a few elders and the staff of God to provide clean water for the people (vv. 5-6).

After the people’s thirst was satisfied, another battle loomed for Moses as the Amalekites approached looking for a fight. The Amalekites were descendants of Esau’s grandson Amalek, and apparently the sibling rivalry between Jacob and Esau carried on to the next generations.

In the battle between Israel and the Amalekites, we are introduced to a young man named Joshua. Moses commanded Joshua to lead the battle while Moses took his spot on top of a hill to watch the proceedings but more importantly, to intercede for the Israelites.

By the end of the chapter, God wins two victories through the leadership of Moses — one over thirst and one over a bloodthirsty mob.

Through Moses’ example in this text, we find three leadership principles.

#### **Be present when leaders face difficult situations. (17:8-10)**

We find in this chapter Moses facing difficult situations, yet through it all it was God’s strength that prevailed and not the strength of Moses. When godly leaders face difficult moments, they can be assured that God will fight their battles and His strength will overcome.

Moses stated, “Tomorrow I will stand on the hilltop with God’s staff in my hand.” The staff of God was a consistent presence in miraculous moments throughout Moses’ leadership. Not only was the presence

of God critical for Moses in facing this difficult situation but also for the people of God. Joshua, Aaron and Hur all assisted their leader in critical ways so that victory was attained.

#### **Be supportive when leaders grow weary. (17:11-13)**

Leaders need others to assist them in battle. As Moses held up the staff of God during the battle, his arms and legs became weak. Thanks to the assistance of Aaron and Hur, Moses was able to stay strong while the battle raged below.

Good leaders have people around them who will help share the burden of the battle. Tired leaders usually do not lead well. Tired leaders are susceptible to bad decisions and moral failures.

As I look back on my leadership, I can see how God has been faithful to provide people like Aaron and Hur to assist me, especially in times of weariness. If you are a leader, find your Aaron and Hur, and if you are in a supportive role, hold up the arms of those God has called to walk alongside you.

#### **Be dependable when leaders are not around. (24:13-15)**

Leaders need people they can trust when they are not around. In Exodus 24, God calls Moses to Mount Sinai for a law consultation. He leaves Aaron and Hur behind to serve as judges to the people in his absence.

Sometimes leaders are hesitant to get away and spend time with God because they have no one to turn over the decisions to. Leaders need dependable people to serve with them to effectively lead people.

Aaron would fail in his dependability as he led the people to worship a golden calf (Ex. 32) but Hur stayed faithful. Dependability is proven by faithful longevity, not only immediate availability.

**“Aaron and Hur held up [Moses’] hands ... So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.”**

Exodus 17:12

# WORD search

- |             |             |           |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| ANOINTING   | ETHIOPIAN   | NEW BIRTH |
| ANGEL       | EUNUCH      | OBEDIENCE |
| BAPTIZE     | FAITH       | PASSAGE   |
| BELIEF      | FORGIVENESS | PHILIP    |
| BORN AGAIN  | GUIDE       | RENEWAL   |
| CLEANSING   | HOLY SPIRIT | REPENT    |
| COMMITMENT  | JERUSALEM   | SALVATION |
| CONFESSION  | JESUS       | SHEEP     |
| CONVERSION  | JUSTICE     | SIN       |
| COVENANT    | KINGDOM     | WATER     |
| DESERT ROAD | NAME        | WORSHIP   |

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## You Gotta' Hear This!



### Finding humor in the everyday moments

#### Banana sandwich brings back memories

A banana sandwich, maybe two, and a cold glass of milk tasted so good when I had played hard outside in the summertime. Many of the lazy days of summer weren't so lazy for me as I grew up. By the time I spent two weeks in Vacation Bible School, that long in singing school, a week in revival (morning and evening services) and helped my parents do the gardening, I didn't get to play all day every day. When my cousin Willard would come, we made up for the working days and zapped all the fun out of our time together.

Because he was a couple of years older than me and male (I had all sisters), I looked up to him and took his lead in whatever we played. If a drenching rain had fallen, we would dam up a deep ditch to make a small "swimming hole." If we had been to a recent cowboy movie (we usually went on Saturdays), we reenacted it scene by scene.

#### Childhood lunchtimes

We played so hard we never even noticed how dirty we got or how hot it was. One thing for sure though, our hearing was keen at lunchtime when Mother called us in. We would have to scrub the dirt and mud off our hands, and sometimes even rinse off with the water hose, before we sat down to what tasted like a feast.

I can still recall how good those banana sandwiches tasted.

Another food-related memory happened when our boys were

young. Steve was serving as an associate pastor while we were in school at Samford University.

After church on Sunday nights, a group of friends from church would go somewhere to get a bite of supper. Most nights we had to turn down the invitation because feeding a family of five at a restaurant was not in our budget.

#### Ordering on a budget

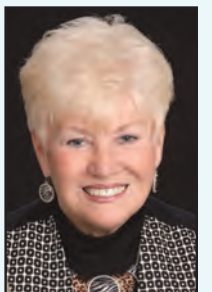
One night Steve told our three sons, "We will go tonight, but you will have to be careful what you order. You each can get a hamburger and Coke."

Most everyone ordered sandwiches except for a guy named Slick. He ordered a steak. I noticed Shannon, our youngest who was about four, eyeing him closely throughout his meal. Finally, Shannon said, "Mr. Slick, could I have that bone when you are through with it?"

I think that took Slick's appetite at the thought of a child longing for a bite of steak. We were humiliated at the time but have laughed about the incident since.

### MEET THE AUTHOR

Barbara Eubanks of Albertville is an author, conference speaker, Christian humorist and retired English teacher. She is the widow of Baptist pastor Steve Eubanks.



As they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The eunuch said, "Look, there's water! What would keep me from being baptized?"

# MEDIA REVIEWS

By Julie Donovan and Tracy Riggs Frontz

The Alabama Baptist

## Book reviews: Children's book, autism awareness and insight for couples

### Too Many Pigs In The Pool

By Wendy Hinote Lanier  
and illustrated by Iris Amaya  
*Sleeping Bear Press, 2022*

Have you ever felt lonely? Mr. Jenkins had a nice house and a nice pool all by himself. He enjoyed his pool but wanted someone to enjoy it with. He invited his neighbor, Ms. Peal, and her pet pig over for a swim.

They enjoyed their time, and Mr. Jenkins didn't feel lonely anymore.



The next day the pig brought a friend to swim. Mr. Jenkins thought two pigs were fine, and did not complain. As the week progressed, more and more pigs splashed in the pool, each day the number doubling. The pigs became a disturbance with their volleyball, aerobics and floaties.

By the end of the week, the 64th pig jumped in the pool, and the pool broke. This left pigs everywhere and Mr. Jenkins frustrated.

Eventually, Mr. Jenkins bought a new pool and put in a "No Pigs In

The Pool! Except Percy and Wanda" sign on his gate. (Percy and Wanda were the two original pigs.) Now Mr. Jenkins could enjoy his pool with friends, and he was not lonely anymore.

There are addition problems at the bottom of each page. As the pigs double, so do the numbers. At the end of the book are fun activities to help children practice their math skills. (Julie Donovan)

### The Dog That Gave My Brother Words

By Wendy Hinote Lanier  
*End Game Press, 2023*

Are you a family with a child diagnosed with autism? Are you curious how you can pray for a family that has a child with autism? Have you ever wondered about the daily challenges a child with autism and their family wrestle with?

"The Dog That Gave My Brother Words," written by Wendy Hinote Lanier and illustrated by Jieting Chen, introduces readers to what it is like to have a child with autism. The book is written from the perspective of the older sister, Sarah, who defines

autism and shows readers the different challenges the family is approached with each day. Her brother, Sam, who is nonverbal, enjoys keeping to himself and playing on his tablet.

The family struggles to go out in public and enjoy daily routines, which takes an emotional toll on

the parents and Sarah. Eventually, the family raises enough money to pay for a therapy dog, which hopefully will help Sam feel more comfortable at home and in public.

When Sam is introduced to his new dog, Lexi, he begins to say a few words.

This is a huge success for the family, and Sarah and her parents are hopeful he will say more words and there will be more positive days ahead.

At the end of the book, readers will find a more in-depth definition of autism and frequently asked questions that help children know what autism is and how they can be helpful. (Julie Donovan)

### Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect

He Desperately Needs  
By Emerson Eggerichs

*Thomas Nelson, 2004*

Love and Respect: The Love She Most Desires; The Respect He Desperately Needs," a New York Times bestseller with more than 20 million copies sold, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

Written by Emerson Eggerichs, its premise is that women need to feel loved and men need to feel respected.

"When either of these needs isn't met, things get crazy. 'Love and Respect' reveals why spouses react negatively to each other and how they can deal with such conflict quickly, easily and biblically," Eggerichs said.

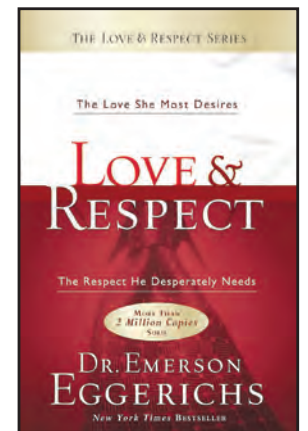
In 2011, Eggerichs released "The Love and Respect Experience: A Husband-Friendly Devotional That Wives Truly Love." It is based on the teachings of the

original book as well as the responses of thousands of couples he surveyed. With 52 chapters, it's intended for a husband and wife to use once a week, but it can be read at any pace.

Each chapter includes a focus Bible verse, two or three pages of teaching, a highlighted insight, a short prayer and action steps with suggestions of ways the chapter can be incorporated into everyday life. The page before the introduction has a QR Code to access free video devotionals that complement the devotional's teachings.

Though Eggerichs doesn't claim that devotionals for couples are necessary, he said in "The Love and Respect Experience" he is confident that "if you spend devotional time together, the Lord will speak to you from His Word and draw near to you as you draw near to Him."

With only 24 chapters, "Love and Respect" isn't meant to correlate directly to "The Love and Respect Experience." Both have practical applications, especially in the appendices. Appendix A in the devotional includes 52 discussion questions that can be used individually, with the couple as a unit or in discussion groups. Other appendix topics include cycles of love and respect, where to get help and reminders of what to say, do or think. (Tracy Riggs Frontz)



### EDITOR'S NOTE

Reviews of films, books, music or other media that appear in TAB are intended to help readers evaluate current media for themselves, their children and grandchildren in order to decide whether to watch, read or listen. Reviews are not an endorsement by the writer or TAB Media.

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