

SOUTHERN BAPTIST DISASTER RELIEF RESPONDS TO
HURRICANE MATTHEW

STORIES ON PAGES 8-9

WESTERN Recorder

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Jessica Paskins (center) is baptized at a church plant partially supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. (Photo by John Swain/NAMB)

Annie Armstrong giving second highest ever

By Diana Chandler

Alpharetta, Ga.—The nearly \$59 million given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in 2016 ranks second highest in the offering's history, the North American Mission Board announced Oct. 12.

Southern Baptists gave \$58,860,553 in the fiscal year ending Sept. 30 to the offering named for noted missionary Annie Armstrong, second only to the \$59,463,281 given in 2007, NAMB said.

"This is extraordinary in a year when so many of our churches gave above and beyond in response to the special call from our International Mission Board," NAMB President Kevin Ezell wrote in a

□ See Annie Armstrong... Page 6

Kentucky DR, Florida church unite to help hurricane victims

By Josie Rabbitt

Jacksonville, Fla.—Pastor Chris Coram watched as the Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief trucks rolled into the North Jacksonville Baptist Church parking lot in Jacksonville Oct. 10.

"It was quite humbling to see the big disaster relief trucks here to help my city," said Coram, who serves as associate pastor of North Jacksonville Baptist Church. "And it is an honor to assist the volunteers and teams with KBDR by hosting them at our church. It is amazing how hearing the words, 'What can I do for you?' touches your heart."

Though Coram, along with his wife Susie, had to immediately evacuate their home near the beach due to Hurricane Matthew, they soon discovered that their church was safe to host disaster relief teams from out of state. They volunteered, happily, to be a host site.

"Though there was no substantial damage to our community, just some fallen oak trees and power outages, it was nice to provide people with warm meals they could no longer cook at home," Coram said. "As part of a host site, you get to witness Jesus' love in action through what the KBDR folks are doing. And they're not just cooking. They're handing out tracts with our church's name on it. They are sharing

□ See Hurricane... Page 8



Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers prepare food for those impacted by Hurricane Matthew in Florida. (Photo provided by the Florida Baptist Convention)

SBC ends fiscal year almost 5 percent over Cooperative Program goal

Nashville—The Southern Baptist Convention ended its fiscal year \$9.23 million over its 2015-2016 budgeted goal and \$6.57 million over the previous year's CP Allocation Budget gifts, according to Frank Page, president and CEO of the SBC Executive Committee.

The SBC received \$195,730,508 in Cooperative Program Allocation gifts for the year. This amount is \$6,570,276, or 3.47 percent, more than it received during the last fiscal year, and is \$9,230,508, or 4.95 percent, more than its budgeted goal of \$186.5 million.

"Our Southern Baptist churches have responded powerfully to the call for missions support and ministry support through the Cooperative Program," Page said.

"I would say two factors are present here—sacrifice and strategic decisions," he noted. "We thank God for the sacrifice of thousands of churches who truly believe we can collaborate together and do more for the gospel than we can do

alone. This sacrificial giving will minister on the mission field, in theological education and other areas stronger than ever before.

"We are also thankful for the strategic decisions of many of our state conventions who are forwarding more and more to the national level," Page said in written comments to Baptist Press. "We have just finished five years of increase (from the states), only the third period of time in our history when national CP forwarded from the states has reached or exceeded 38.75 percent. We are thankful for our state partners and thankful for the strategic decisions that many have made."

In designated giving, the fiscal year's total of \$204,671,725 is 4.95 percent above the previous year's \$195,013,412. Of this designated amount, \$204,135,367 was disbursed to IMB and NAMB through the seasonal missions offerings and Global Hunger Relief. The balance was designated for other SBC entities or

the SBC Operating Budget. Combined gifts to SBC causes and CP Allocation Budget gifts showed a 4.22 percent increase over the same time last year.

The convention-adopted budgeted amount was distributed as follows: 50.41 percent to international missions through the International Mission Board, 22.79 percent to North American missions through the North American Mission Board, 22.16 percent to theological education, 2.99 percent to the SBC operating budget and 1.65 percent to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

Of the amount received over the budgeted goal, IMB received a full 51 percent of the \$9.23 million overage, while the SBC operating budget received only 2.4 percent of the overage. Other SBC entities received the same percentage of the overage as the allocation formula in the 2015-2016 adopted CP Allocation Budget.

"We believe the Acts 1:8 strategy includes local, state, as well as national and international ministries, and we are

thankful for our state partners," Page added.

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow. While we give thanks for the strategic decisions and the sacrifice of God's people, the heart of the issue is always stewardship," he said. "We need to continue to call upon our people to be diligent in fulfilling the biblical tithe and going beyond so that we can truly see our world touched for the gospel."

September gifts through CP totaled \$16,569,490, while designated gifts were \$4,681,908. Monies include receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 2015-2016 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget and to SBC causes as stipulated in designated gifts.

The CP is Southern Baptists channel of giving, begun in 1925, through which a local church can contribute to the ministries of its state/regional convention and the missions and ministries of the SBC. (BP)

Hopkinsville church celebrates 175 years, commemorates church's founding

By Myriah Snyder

Hopkinsville—Kelly Baptist Church in Hopkinsville is celebrating its 175th anniversary Oct. 23 at 10:30 a.m. The morning will consist of former pastors, youth pastors and music directors being recognized as well as two former members who were ordained into the ministry and now are pastors elsewhere.

A history of the church in book form will be available and a presentation of old pictures will be shown.

Additionally, a plaque commemorating the church's founding in 1841 will be presented and eventually hung in the building.

"Kelly Baptist Church is a very missions-minded church. We have supported

missions and church plants throughout the years," Pastor Phillip Brumfield, who is working on his 15th year at Kelly Baptist, said. "They are a giving church, and God has blessed us because of that."

Harold Lancaster, a deacon at Kelly Baptist, has been a member for more than 60 years.

"I came to Kelly because we had a young pastor who was about two or three years older than I was, and he came to visit my family. I just fell in love with it. Eventually the whole family came to Kelly and we've been here ever since," he said. "I've seen many lost souls won to Christ through Kelly Baptist. This is my home church."

"I love my church and I love my pastor," he continued. "I've always said

there's three things you can't talk about. The first is my wife. The second is my church, and the last is my pastor."

Kelly Baptist was organized on Oct. 23, 1841 as Mt. Zoar Baptist Church; the name changed in 1935. The church has met in its current building since 1969. In more recent years the church has been given the deed to its property—something that they did not have for many years—and is helping to plant other churches, including Life Community Church in Owensboro.

"Kelly Baptist is a wonderful place to worship," Teresa Petsch, a member of the anniversary committee, said. "I was away from the community and this church for 30 years. I returned a little less than four years ago, and from the moment I

walked back into the door, I felt like I had returned to home and family. Many times I've heard people describe our church that way, even if they weren't born and raised here."

"We are all very excited about our homecoming/175th anniversary celebration," Petsch said. "Church homecomings are always such a wonderful time to reconnect with old friends, and we hope this year to welcome lots of visitors to a beautiful day of worship and fellowship."

Brumfield said, "I think the goal of the next 175 years is to always certainly be faithful to stand on His word and proclaim it. Hopefully, we reach a generation of people and love them. We are a very loving church and we hope to reach people where they are." (WR)

Kentucky Baptists celebrating boosts in baptisms, CP giving at annual meeting

Florence—Kentucky Baptist churches will celebrate 14,456 baptisms last year—the highest number since 2012—and reaching a historic milestone of contributing more in a single year through the Cooperative Program when they meet Nov. 15 at Florence Baptist Church.

"The cooperative mission work of Kentucky Baptists is flourishing," said Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood. "We are looking forward to giving praise to God for what our churches are doing to share the gospel throughout our state, the nation and the world."

Churches that significantly helped Kentucky Baptists exceed expectations will be recognized during the annual meeting for leading the state in baptisms, missions work and missions giving.

One individual will be honored with the Distinguished Cooperative Program Leader Award for lifelong devotion to the Cooperative Program, the primary means for supporting the work of Southern Baptist missionaries and missions.

"What we're seeing are the fruits of Kentucky Baptists being obedient to what Jesus called them to do: Share the gospel," Chitwood said.

Kentucky Baptists will also have opportunities to be a part of evangelistic initiatives while attending the annual meeting.

The first is a challenge to join the convention in collecting 2,000 hospice buckets that can be used by missionaries in Sub-Saharan Africa share the gospel with AIDS patients. The second is to participate in Crossover, a missions outreach to residents in the Florence area.

One of the highlights of the one-day meeting will be the convention sermon from North American Mission Board President Kevin Ezell, a former Kentuckian who previously served as lead pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.

Meanwhile, messengers from affiliated Kentucky Baptist churches will elect new convention officers and approve a \$23.2 million missions budget.

"Come and be a witness to the good work being done in the name of our Savior, and join us as we rejoice in God working through His people to reach Kentucky and the world for Christ," Chitwood urged.

For more information about the Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting and related activities, visit www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting. (KBC)



Payton begins duties as Oldham-Trimble DOM

By Myriah Snyder

Crestwood—Mark Payton began duties as the new director of missions for Oldham-Trimble Association Sept. 15.

Payton brings with him 33 years of ministry experience. Payton goes to Oldham-Trimble from the pastorate of Dry Ridge Baptist Church. Before that, his ministry experience includes Shively Heights and Gethsemane Baptist churches.

He has been active on the denomination level, serving as vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Pastor's Conference twice, president of the conference once, as second vice president of the KBC, as a trustee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and currently as a trustee at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

"Probably a year ago I said to my wife that I would like to wind up my ministry as director of missions somewhere. I resigned from my pastoring position, and seven months later, here I am," Payton explained.

"I love to help the pastors; they are friends of mine. I think God was prepar-

ing me (for this)," he added.

Payton said his top priorities for the association are to see all churches in his association hold Vacation Bible Schools and become Acts 1:8 churches.

"We need to not only do missions in Oldham County or Trimble County, but to also do them in Kentucky and further out in the state and North America and around the world," he said. "But until we are all Acts 1:8 churches, we're really not a New Testament church."

Payton also wants to be an encouragement to bivocational pastors throughout the association. "I've learned a lot about bivocational guys. They've put so much time not just in their business or whatever secular job they're doing, but in preparing a sermon and doing all the ministry that has to be done."

"I'm praying God will use Mark (Payton) to encourage and missionally challenge the churches of the association," said Eric Allen, missions mobilization team leader of the KBC. "I'm looking forward to working with Mark and trust we can partner together to strengthen and plant churches." (WR)



Mark Payton

Severns Valley DOM Gerald Murphy retires

Elizabethtown—Gerald Murphy is retiring after serving as director of missions at Severns Valley Baptist Association for the past 10 years. He will retire effective March 31, 2017.

"I'll be 66, but I'm not retiring from the ministry," he said. "The plans are to take a month in April and go to Florida to the beach, then come back to hope that the Lord has a pastorate or something like that to keep going."

Before becoming a DOM, he was a pastor, a music minister and a missionary with the International Mission Board.

He hopes to use his calling to pastor or even serve as interim pastor after retirement in the Hodgenville area, because he and his wife Shelia plan to stay in the area and enjoy time with their grandson.

"God might call me to serve in another capacity; I don't know. We're just simply open," he said.

During his time at Severns Valley, Murphy has seen himself as a "pastor to

ministers," he said. He's spent his energy focusing on training pastors and lay leaders alike to serve the church. His focus has been "more healthy churches," he added. Since going to Severns Valley, the association has increased from 48 to 52 churches.

Another priority during his time at Severns Valley has been evangelism. He has made an effort to get involved in any Kentucky Baptist Convention evangelism initiatives as well as have an active Disaster Relief group within the association. In 2010 his association worked on an area wide crusade which saw 185 decisions for Christ.

"I'm thankful for the partnership we've shared with the Severns Valley Association as a result of Gerald's leadership as DOM," Eric Allen, missions and mobilization team leader with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said. "Gerald will be missed by the churches of the association, KBC staff and his DOM colleagues." (WR)

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New videos help churches celebrate Cooperative Program month

Louisville, Ky.—Kentucky Baptist churches have access to several new videos that celebrate lives changed through the Cooperative Program.

The short clips feature people who came to know Christ through ministries supported through the Cooperative Program, including a Kentucky high schooler saved during summer camp at Crossings and a college student introduced to Jesus through Baptist Collegiate Ministries.

Those videos are available online for churches to use in worship services year-round, but, because October is Cooperative Program awareness month, there's no time like now.

Each October, Kentucky Baptists emphasize the importance of the Cooperative Program in effectively reaching people with the gospel at home and abroad.

Through the Cooperative Program,

2,400 Kentucky congregations work together to support state, national and international missionaries and ministries.

During the last fiscal year, which ended Aug. 31, Kentucky churches gave more than \$22.3 million through the Cooperative Program, topping the previous year's gifts by \$1 million.

"Kentucky Baptists refuse to sit silently by when multitudes of people here at home and abroad desperately need the gospel," said KBC Executive Director Paul Chitwood.

The Southern Baptist Convention-wide Cooperative Program Emphasis continues through Oct. 31.

View the Cooperative Program October Emphasis Collection and download at <https://vimeo.com/album/4181832>.

For more informational and promotional resources, visit www.kybaptist.org/cp. (KBC)

Rash named editor-elect of Ala. Baptist paper

Birmingham, Ala.—Jennifer Davis Rash has been named editor-elect of The Alabama Baptist newspaper in a succession plan for editor Bob Terry.

Terry, a 50-year veteran in Christian journalism, told the newspaper's board of directors during an Oct. 7-8 meeting in Birmingham, "At some point I will finalize my plans for retirement, and as I do so, it will be with great appreciation for the action of this board of directors and with great confidence in the future of this ministry."

Rash has served as executive editor of The Alabama Baptist (TAB) for the past six years, overseeing the weekly production of one of the nation's most widely circulated state Baptist papers—with 66,000-plus print and 1,000 digital subscribers.

She joined the paper's staff as a news writer Jan. 1, 1996, five months after Terry became editor. They have helped lead the staff to more than 200 national

and state awards.

"Jennifer Rash is an exceptional writer and has demonstrated tremendous capacity as the executive editor,"

TAB board chairwoman Amelia Pearson said. "We are very fortunate to have someone with Jennifer's skills and talents to name as editor-elect for The Alabama Baptist."

Along with her responsibilities with TAB, Rash serves as vice president for Associated Church Press and is a past president of the Baptist Communicators Association.

An honors graduate from the University of Alabama with a bachelor of arts in journalism, Rash earned a master's degree in theological studies from Samford's Beeson Divinity School. She served two years on the mission field with the International Mission Board after college. She and her husband Jason are members of NorthPark Baptist Church in Trussville. (BP)



Jennifer Rash



Rhonda Kelley (left) chairwoman of the Women's Ministry Advisory Council, is joined by Candi Finch, secretary for the Council, and Rhonda Rhea for a fellowship meal during the Council's Aug. 11-12 meeting in Atlanta. (Photo by Roger Oldham)

Women's Ministry Advisory Council conducts survey on increasing women's participation in SBC

Atlanta—Fourteen women met for two days in Atlanta to continue their discussion about increasing the participation of women in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee, appointed the Women's Ministry Advisory Council to gather information concerning the involvement of women's ministry leaders and ministry wives in their Southern Baptist churches.

With the purpose of involving Southern Baptist women in all areas of convention life, the task force has been at work since January conducting a survey and researching resources specifically for women.

Encouraging results were shared with Page and with Ken Weathersby, EC vice president for convention advancement, and Roger (Sing) Oldham, vice president for convention communications and relations.

More than 3,300 women have responded to the survey being conducted through SurveyMonkey. Most women were ages 25–64 who expressed interest in more training and involvement at the local church, associational, state and denominational levels. The majority were lay leaders who serve through women's ministry, Woman's Missionary Union or other church programs specifically for women. About one-fourth of the respondents were ministry wives, serving churches alongside their husbands.

The task force would like to hear

from additional women in the Southern Baptist Convention who reflect a diversity of ages and stages of life as well as different ethnic, cultural and educational backgrounds. While the majority of respondents to date have been from strong Baptist states such as Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas, surveys have been completed by women in all 50 states. The task force wants to hear from more women in the Northeast, Midwest and West as well as Hawaii. The task force also wants to hear from more women who are under 25 or above 64 years of age.

Information gleaned from the survey and the research of the task force members will be presented to the SBC Executive Committee in February 2017 and to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Phoenix next June.

To access the Women's Ministry Advisory Council's online survey, go to www.surveymonkey.com/r/SouthernBaptistWomen.

Rhonda Kelley, a leader in women's ministry, serves as chair of the advisory council. A member of First Baptist Church in New Orleans, she is the wife of NOBTS President Chuck Kelley.

Linda Cooper, Woman's Missionary Union president and member of Forest Park Baptist Church, Bowling Green, and Mary Mohler, wife of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler Jr. and a member of Third Avenue Baptist Church, Louisville, also serve on the council. (BP)

21 Chibok girls freed in Boko Haram prisoner swap

By Diana Chandler

Abuja, Nigeria—The Nigerian government has secured the release of 21 Chibok schoolgirls kidnapped by Boko Haram more than two years ago, a Nigerian government official announced on Twitter Oct. 13.

The kidnapping saga is part of the continuing horrors in Nigeria caused by the terror group, with an estimated 25,000 people, including many Christians, killed by Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria since 2009.

An estimated 2.6 million people have also been displaced in violence that has created a humanitarian crisis in Nigeria.

Boko Haram released the 21 girls to the Nigerian Department of State Services, according to presidential spokesperson Mallam Garba Shehu.

The girls who had been taken from the mostly Christian town of Chibok in April 2014 were released in exchange for four Boko Haram prisoners who were being held in Banki in northeast Nigeria, an undisclosed source told the French news agency AFP.

Red Cross and the Swiss government brokered the negotiations, Shehu said in a series of tweets.

About 200 of the kidnapped girls remain missing.

"It is confirmed that 21 of the missing Chibok Girls have been released and are in the custody of the Department of State Services, DSS. The release of the girls, in a limited number, is the outcome of negotiations between the administration and the Boko Haram ... brokered by the International Red Cross and the Swiss government," Shehu tweeted. "The negotiations will continue."

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari "welcomes the release of the girls but cautioned Nigerians to be mindful of the fact that more than 30,000 fellow citizens ... were killed via terrorism," Shehu tweeted.

The released girls were said to be resting, "with all of them very tired coming out of the process," Shehu said.

The international group Bring Back

Our Girls that has advocated for their release welcomed Shehu's report.

"This wonderful development confirms what we have always known about the capacity of our government [sic] to rescue our #ChibokGirls," spokespersons for the group tweeted. "While awaiting further details, we take this opportunity to salute the work of our security services at the front lines—the commitment, resilience and tireless efforts of our members of the Multi-national Joint Task Force and the civilian JTF."

The advocacy group called for the government to make "the safety, security, and well-being of the other girls a high priority" and urged "the international community to continue to support our government's effort to rescue all other abducted Nigerians."

As recently as Sept. 22, Buhari reiterated his willingness to negotiate the girls' release with "bonafide leaders" of Boko Haram and invited the United Nations to serve as an intermediary.

"The split in the insurgent group is not helping matters," Buhari said in a press release. "Government had reached out, ready to negotiate, but it became difficult to identify credible leaders. We will welcome intermediaries such as UN outfits to step in."

Boko Haram has been identified as still under the leadership of Abubakar Shekau, a jihadist at times reported dead and whom the Islamic State group claimed to have replaced on Aug. 3 with Abu Musab al-Barnawi.

Dozens of girls said to be among those kidnapped from Chibok are shown in a video Boko Haram released Aug. 14 offering the girls in exchange for the release of imprisoned terrorists. An armed and masked Boko Haram member speaking on the video said some of the girls had been killed in airstrikes by the Nigerian military and 40 had been married, but he did not specify the number of girls who remained alive, the Associated Press reported.

The Chibok ordeal began in April 2014 when Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls from the Chibok government boarding school. (BP)

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

If you are reading this article, you probably have a pastor. How can you express your appreciation to him for all he does to shepherd God's flock? Let me offer two suggestions.

First, consider sending your pastor and his wife to Shepherding 2017. Registration is now open for this event at www.kybaptist.org/shepherding. The Kentucky Baptist

Together
We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

Convention and Baptist Health hope that Shepherding 2017 will bring a time of godly refreshment to ministry couples.

As in the past, we desire to bring couples together in a relaxed setting where they can experience renewal, strengthen relationships, and encounter God in worship. The conference begins

Thursday, Jan. 26, and concludes Saturday, Jan. 28. Space is limited. Register early to ensure availability. The registration fee covers only a portion of the costs associated with this event. As a means of joining you in blessing and encouraging our ministers, the remaining cost is provided by Baptist Health and by Kentucky Baptists' gifts through the Cooperative Program.

Second, Steve Rice and I will be hosting a Holy Land tour March 14-23, 2017, for any Kentucky Baptist who would like to join us. The tour would be a great learning opportunity for anyone but especially for pastors. Churches may want to consider sending their pastor or at least assisting him with the trip. The estimated total price is \$3,869 per person from Louisville, Ky. A \$300 deposit (paid to Jerusalem Tours) will reserve your place.

Included in the estimated price are: flights, hotels, touring, breakfast and dinner daily, four lunches, tips, airport taxes and fuel charges (subject to change by the airline). Not included in the estimated price are: optional travel insurance (\$292), meals not noted in the itinerary, drinks and items of a personal nature. For more information, contact Stephen Rice, KBC Church Consulting & Revitalization Team leader, at (502) 489-3434 or steve.rice@kybaptist.org, or call Jerusalem Tours at (888) 373-8687.

God has blessed us with faithful, fearless men who love the Lord Jesus and His church. Whether the above opportunities work for you and/or your pastor, I trust you will find a way to express your appreciation for the man of God who spends his life preaching the gospel to you and your family, praying for you and your family, serving you and your family, and loving you and your family.

Serving as a pastor is a high and holy calling and those who serve well are worthy of double honor (1 Timothy 5:17). Let us thank God for our pastors!

Students, professionals, retirees key to engaging cities

In late September, an informal group of nine state Baptist editors was invited to meet with members of a new media network for the International Mission Board. Gathering outside of London, England, the meeting served two chief purposes: to share still-unfolding plans for communicating stories from the field with Southern Baptists, and to provide a vision tour of one of the first five cities in its Global Cities Initiative.

After the International Mission Board announced it was dismantling its Richmond Communications office, Baptist editors raised concerns about dismissing 30 of its veteran staff members. For more than a year now, some editors have been frustrated by a perceived lack of flow of news and missionary stories, fearing it might negatively impact Cooperative Program gifts and Lottie Moon offerings in the long run.

At the recent meeting, Eric King, church mobilization leader, Bryson Holtson*, media network leader, and other team members outlined plans to establish a global network of media professionals charged with producing stories, videos and resource materials focused on the IMB's mobilization and engagement goals. Unfortunately, distribution primarily will be through a newly designed, web-based platform and social media, rather than print—unless state papers pick up stories from online.

Shifting focus to the Global Cities Initiative, Chad Rigney, an IMB worker, told the editors, "London is the most ethnically diverse, and arguably, the most influential city on the planet." Home to some 270 nationalities who speak more than 300 languages, London is a primary driver for business, finance, music and culture for Europe and the West. "Reach London, and you will reach the world," he counseled.

Once giving us the King James Version in the people's English and the hymn "Amazing Grace," London has grown increasingly apathetic as of late toward Christianity. Anglicans, boasting nearly two-thirds of the population in the 1960s, now represent only 31 percent; and other Christians, comprising 23 percent in the 1960s, now make up less than 7.6 percent. In fact, almost 45 percent of Londoners are not affiliated with any faith. Although numerous church buildings dot the cityscape, many of them sit empty, averaging 20 or fewer in attendance.

Chad, who works with the city's millennials, stunned the

group, asserting that "97 percent of young adults in their 20s had never met a follower of Christ." How can this be? The vast majority are part of a recent migration. An estimated 37 percent of Londoners herald from outside England, many having arrived in the last five years. They've come seeking employment, or they are the very wealthy looking to make investments. Among its 7 million residents are at least 66 of the world's unreached people groups, including 28 of its unengaged people groups. Walking down its streets, one encounters Algerians, Bangladeshis, Chinese, Indians, Iranians, Jamaicans, Nigerians, Pakistanis, Poles, Russians, Somalis, Sri Lankans, Turks, Vietnamese—not tourists, but residents. Religions, subsequently, are as diverse.

The GCI objective is to send limitless workers to impact a city's lostness. But, how does one do that with limited finances? One answer could be to engage business professionals, students and retirees, i.e., self-support people using their vocational skill sets to fill needs in

the job market—engineers, teachers, medical doctors, nurses, bankers, lawyers, etc. While there, they cultivate relationships, assist in starting new ministries among affinity groups, invite acquaintances to Bible studies and, hopefully, be instrumental in starting churches.

Shane Mikeska, a Southern Seminary graduate who works among students in a university community on London's outskirts, said, "As we look at the city and see its desperate needs, God has opened our eyes to Western Europe and its need of the gospel. We see their apathy, and it breaks our hearts." He hopes that some of the 50,000 U.S. students who study abroad in England each year as well as groups visiting from Baptist schools will join his team in engaging the city's numerous campuses.

If it proves effective, we just may be seeing the future of Southern Baptist missions. Trends indicate the vast majority of people will soon inhabit cities. By 2025, there will be more than 600 megacities. English is the world's leading business language for the moment, but the next three largest language groups include Mandarin Chinese, with 848 million speakers; Spanish, 399 million, and Portuguese, 203 million. London is a pilot project, and what our teams learn there about creating limitless pathways for missions may be the key to engaging other megacities with the gospel.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

Fresh Ideas: Refuge for Refugees

He's in front of you in the grocery line. She's the new girl in your child's classroom. They're the family who moved in next door. You've read about refugees moving to your town, but you're not sure what to say...so you just turn your head.

What's a correct Christian response to strangers in your community? When we see immigrants as individuals—dearly loved by God—it's easy to truly care. Your Bible class, ministry group or entire church can impact eternity when you accept this new "mission field" in your own backyard.

Aggressively seek out refugees or immigrants, and ask God to guide you to minister to them. Read local news, and study census statistics. Ask church members to pay attention in their work place and neighborhood.

Obtain information from governmental entities and leaders. Drive the neighborhoods where immigrants live.

Your method of ministry will vary widely to fit needs of individuals and people groups, but the goal is the same: to show God's love and share His plan of salvation. Some of these simple ideas may help you get started.

Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

- Begin an ESL class in your home or church to assist with language.
- Help them find a place to live. Some may have few possessions, so help with furnishings, box fans, refrigerator, clothing and food.
- Assist with children's school registration, finding medical or dental assistance, connecting utilities, or basic skills such as grocery shopping.
- Offer help with employment, such

as job leads, interview tips, wardrobe assistance or computer skills.

- Be a true friend. Learn their names. Pronounce it correctly. Invite them to your home. Give a Bible in their native language.
- Show love to their children. Give a backpack of treats, school supplies and clothing. Invite them to play with your kids. Help with homework.
- Socialize with them. Assign individuals or families to church members. Include them in family and church holiday celebrations.
- Bring them to church. Include them in worship, Bible class and every aspect of church. Provide translation headphones or a worship service in their language, if needed.
- Plan a ladies' lunch. Pair each refugee woman with a church member who will befriend and help her.

Most importantly, help refugees find true refuge in God. Share Jesus. There she is, in front of you in the grocery line. Initiate a conversation now.

WESTERN Recorder

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Letters to the editor:

The Baptist Forum section of the Western Recorder provides an opportunity for Kentucky Baptists to express their viewpoints. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Western Recorder's editorial staff, its Board of Directors, or the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Letters should be no more than 300 words in length and will be edited for style, clarity and space. Letters must reflect a spirit of Christian charity and civility.



Pastor, love your Baptist association

The missions strategy for Southern Baptist Convention ministry through our churches is found in Acts 1:8, where Jesus states, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

- "Jerusalem" is missions through our local churches and Baptist associations to our "Jerusalem."
- "Judea" is missions through our state Baptist conventions to our states.
- "Samaria" entails missions through our North America Mission Board to unchurched areas of the United States and Canada.
- "The uttermost part of the earth" encompasses missions through our International Missions Board to unreached peoples in all nations of the world.

In tandem with our churches, the Baptist association is the first line of biblical missions. As many local associations hold their annual meetings, it is an opportune time to lovingly encourage pastors to be active and supportive. Love your association.

God has allowed me to serve as a pastor since 1969, such a holy honor. In each ministry, the director of missions/associational missionary and associational relationships have been a strength and blessing to my walk with Christ and ministry. Thank you to the DOMs at those associations—Robert Mizelle, Wesley Pitts, Dennis Pulley, Rick Stevens, Robert Tyson, Rusty Sumrall.

Pastor, here are a few reasons for being active in support, involvement and attendance in local associations.

Missions vision begins at home. Your associational DOM will be a great guide and resource as churches do local missions. Every DOM wants to be a help to the churches and a catalyst for new church plants and reaching souls for Christ and the gospel. As we unite with the vision of our state conventions, the association

is more important than ever. As the late British missionary C.T. Studd once said, "The light that shines farthest shines brightest at home."

Continuing education is a great benefit of attending associational meetings and pastors' conferences. We must be lifelong learners. Each associational gathering teaches us about missions, Bible study and church leadership, thus aiding us to be more effective pastors.

First Person



Roger Freeman

Doctrinal issues in Baptist life have been best addressed by the local association, which predates both the state and national conventions. Great doctrinal statements like the 1742 Philadelphia Confession of Faith guided Baptist churches long before other great statements came along. The 1925 Baptist Faith and Message is modeled after this 1742 associational confession. When doctrinal issues arise among Baptist churches, the local association can address and handle them in an efficient manner better than at a state or national level.

Relationships we build in the association will make us and the church we serve stronger and more fruitful. Younger pastors need the wisdom of seasoned veteran pastors. Veteran pastors need the bright spirits of the younger pastor. We need each other. The "Lone Ranger" pastor is not the biblical model. We are soldiers together in Christ's army. The DOM will be a friend and counselor for pastors. "Together for the gospel" is our motto.

Prayer support is our continual need. We are to "pray one for another" (James 5:16), and associational relationships give us many prayer partners. The sincere fervent prayers of fellow believers will carry the pastor as we fight the battles of life and ministry.

So, pastor friend, let's love our association. We will be better laborers for God and our people. The local Baptist association is a blessing to the life and work of a pastor and a strength to the mission of our churches. (BP)

Parents should pay attention, trust God-given instincts

In his 2013 book "Things That Matter," political columnist and commentator Charles Krauthammer included an essay called "Life By Manual."

"Every human activity is now the subject of the how-to industry. A visit to the local bookstore shows how far things have gone. Not just parenting and loving, but everything—eating and drinking, running and sunning, living itself—is a skill to be learned and mastered. The business succeeds because Americans have come to believe that only

an expert can teach them the correct way to walk, or bend their knees or think well of themselves."

Krauthammer is not belittling learning from others. He does seem to be poking gentle fun at the idea that we are helpless and our own instincts cannot be trusted. Nowhere is this more evident than parenting. Advice

comes from everywhere—books, TV, school, conversations with friends ... a wide variety of "experts."

Realizing that I, too, run the risk of being one of those voices, I would suggest the following:

Pay attention to spiritual development. Want them to be as strong and accomplished spiritually as you do academically, athletically, socially ... and understand their spiritual growth is more up to you as their parent than to their church. 3 John 4 says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in truth." Make this your prayer and your goal for your kids.

Trust yourself and instincts God gave you. God never gives us a responsibility without giving us what we need to fulfill it. That includes parenting. Listen, read, talk, engage ideas all you want ... but sift and sort as you do. Above all, make sure the approach you take is consistent with what the Bible teaches.



David Garrard

Using your God-given influence

There she was. Sitting on a beige sofa in my living room. Let's call her Ashley.

Ashley had grown up in church and is still a faithful member who serves in the women's ministry. She is a loving wife, mother and career woman. From the outside, she had it all.

However, she had a fear stirring within her that she had no influence. She kept saying over and over that she was just a wife and just a mother.

I think that there are a lot of Ashley's out there—a lot of incredibly amazing women who are serving their hearts out for the Lord who do not have big platforms. They are simply using their gifts right where God has placed them to point others to Jesus.

But in their honest and vulnerable moments, they wonder if they are measuring up or if their work really matters since their platform isn't skyrocketing.

There is this misconception that to have influence you must speak from a stage, write a book that makes it as a New York Times Best Seller, or have a large Instagram following with perfectly styled and filtered pictures.

We have glamorized what it means to follow Jesus. We think it happens on stages and in books, but it really happens around tables, neighborhoods, small groups and living rooms.

I bet the top three people who have changed your life were eye to eye, across from you, investing time in your life. Who were they? What is holding you back from investing in someone in your life?

The biggest lie from the enemy is that, if our influence isn't big, it doesn't matter. The problem with this lie is that we make influence the goal and not loving Jesus.

If we do this, a few things will happen. First, your heart will be consumed with what the world thinks. Second, you will miss the Holy Spirit working right before your eyes. Last, you will never be satisfied. Rather than using the spiritual gifts God has entrusted to you, you use Him as a stepping stone to get somewhere.

7 habits of financially wise people

Whatever your financial situation, there are books telling you how to fix it—get rich quick, get out of debt, make money without risk, avoid taxes, make higher than average returns on investing, etc. Since the days of Benjamin Franklin and his book, "The Way to Wealth," financial self-help books have become like diet books: a hot item for a brief period then swiftly disappearing to the used book vendors. Only a few books have withstood the test of time. One of those is George Clason's "The Richest Man in Babylon" compiled in the 1920s.

Clason used parables set in ancient Babylon, the place where money may have been invented. In one parable, Algamish tells Arkad the secret of his wealth: "I found the road to wealth when I decided that a part of all I earned was mine to keep." Arkad responds, "Is that all?" Arkad reluctantly applies the wisdom, and at Algamish's death, Arkad becomes the richest man in Babylon, giving that same advice to others: "Say to yourselves, 'A part of all I earn is mine to keep.' Say it in the morning. Say it at noon. Say it at night. Say it to yourself until the words stand out like letters of fire across the sky."

People often lose common sense when dealing with dollars and cents. "The Richest Man in Babylon" has endured because Clason was able to put in a nutshell the basics of good financial planning. Taken together, they form a kind of seven habits of financially wise people:

1. Start thy purse to fattening. (Save.)
2. Control thy expenditures. (Make a budget and stick to it.)
3. Make thy gold multiply. (Invest wisely.)
4. Guard thy treasures from loss by consulting with "wise men." (Get guidance from qualified financial professionals.)
5. Make of thy dwelling a profitable investment. (Own your own home.)
6. Insure a future income. (Have adequate life insurance, disability insurance and retirement income.)
7. Increase thy ability to earn. (Continually improve your job skills.)



Don Spencer

Somewhere bigger.

So, what do we do to fight this misconception?

1. Use your gifts. Somehow, some way, anywhere, any time. Forget about size, or impact, or reach.

First Person



Jessica Pigg

2. Take frequent breaks from social media. It is so easy to keep up with everyone's accomplishments just by reading their social media profiles. Pull away from social media enough to fix your eyes on Christ and to stay in your lane. Remember that you are running your race, not someone else's (Hebrews 12:1-3).

3. Don't overlook who is right in front of you. Don't forget to look for opportunities to serve people right where you are. If your focus is always on the "bigger and better" days ahead of you, chances are you will miss the blessings that occur in your normal everyday life. Serve, love and make much of God and the person standing right in front of you.

4. Remember to make His name famous. We are not here to make our name great or build our following. Scripture is clear that when we receive attention and praise here, that is all we get (Matthew 6). We have received our reward in full. Even if our following gets large or we garner a book-signing line, remember to point others to the cross.

You have influence because of who lives inside you. Forget about size or impact or reach. Confidently step out in what you've already been given to live fully alive as the woman you were created to be.

If we ever get a chance to meet face to face on a beige sofa, I hope you will share your story about how God is using you in His plan right where you are. (BP)

Engage 24 workshop champions evangelism

By Josie Rabbitt

Alpharetta, Ga.—An Engage 24 workshop was exactly what pastor Bruce Smith Sr. apparently needed. Some could say it is what he was searching for.

"I'm just so excited I came," Smith said of the evangelism forum hosted at the North American Mission Board building in Alpharetta, Ga., Oct. 4-5. "The speakers were funny, on point and validated what I am already doing in my church when it comes to evangelism. I needed that encouragement because church planting can be hard. And yes, there are many things I haven't started doing when it comes to evangelizing that I plan on doing when I get back."

Smith planted New Generation Baptist Church Fellowship four years ago in McDonough, Ga., and continues to serve as lead pastor.

"Church planting pastors face a lot of obstacles that come from inside the church as well as outside the church," Smith said. "Yet, it's great to come to workshops like Engage 24 where you learn how to be more non-conventional—a church without walls that can touch a lot of people—through the power and understanding of evangelism."

Engage 24's theme, "Evangelism Leadership for the Pastor," featured speakers like Ronnie Floyd, Ted Traylor, Tim Dowdy, Hal Seed and James Merritt.

Merritt, senior pastor of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Ga., passionately professed during the final session "The gospel is exactly the power we need. It's what we believe in. We must be pastors who will share it."

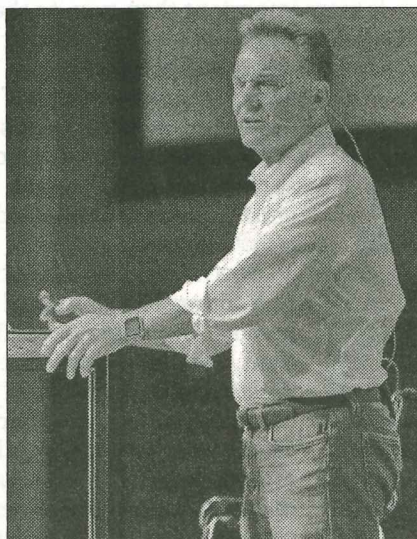
Other sessions the 110 attendees sat in on included topics on how to use campaigns to engage non-Christians in a community, evangelism versus fellowship and the seven imperatives for evangelism.

Floyd, immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, shared the seven key imperatives of evangelism: understanding calling, defining vision, addressing warfare, staying in prayer, maintaining an evangelistic culture within lives and churches, being pastors and seeing the importance of people.

"Pastors, you need to return to understanding your role in a community," said Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas. "You're there to share and plant the seed of knowledge that anyone can have a relationship with Jesus Christ. He really did die for every person in your community so this much depends on you ... you must reach them with the gospel."

Floyd reiterated the importance of knowing that a pastor's number one calling is to evangelize, which simply means "reaching the lost for Jesus Christ."

During a question-and-answer



Pastor Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in Springdale, Ark., was among Southern Baptist leaders who shared insights, experience and best ideas for mobilizing church members during the Engage 24 workshop hosted at the North American Mission Board Oct. 4-5. (NAMB staff photo)

session, pastors Dowdy and Traylor shared how their pride and joy comes from hearing someone thank them for sharing the gospel.

"When someone comes up to me and says, 'Thank you for telling me about Jesus,' I just respond by saying I hope to hear that more each day," said Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla. "We're gospel preachers. We've got to make sharing His Word a priority." (BP)

Annie Armstrong

Continued from Page 1

thank you column to Southern Baptists. "We are humbled by how God has moved once again through Southern Baptists and excited about what this means for our missionaries who serve throughout the United States and Canada."

North Carolina and Alabama Baptists gave the largest amounts this year, collecting \$6,058,574 and \$5,878,970, respectively, NAMB said.

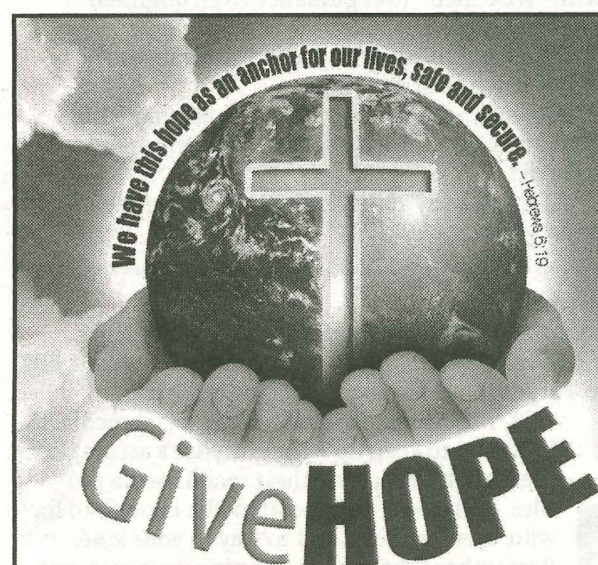
"We are so grateful for the pastors, state leaders and all Southern Baptists who gave so generously in these states," Ezell said.

The Tennessee Baptist Convention notably made the largest increase in giving to the offering this year, NAMB said, with its total of \$4,561,392 coming in at \$376,878 more than 2015.

Conventions from other states noted for increased giving are, alphabetically, Arizona, Arkansas, California, the Dakotas, Georgia, Kentucky, Minnesota-Wisconsin, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, the Northwest Convention, Ohio, South Carolina, the Southern Baptists of Texas, the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, West Virginia and Wyoming.

While Southern Baptist churches in the South are closer to effective congregation to population ratios, with Mississippi topping the list at one church for 1,395 people, Ezell said the contributions are even more critical in reaching the lost in such states as New Jersey and New York. In those New England states, he said, there is only one Southern Baptist church for every 75,124 and 57,900 people, respectively. In the province of Quebec, Canada, the ratio is one church for every 185,349 people.

"NAMB is rushing resources to non-South areas," he said. (BP)



KBC Mission Board Recommendations to be Considered for Fiscal Year 2017-18

Annual Meeting - Nov. 15 Florence Baptist Church, Florence, Kentucky

The annual Cooperative Program goals, as well as the percentages for the division of Cooperative Program funds between Kentucky Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention causes, are determined by the Kentucky Baptist Convention in its annual session.

Upon recommendation of the Mission Board, the Convention in Elizabethtown, November 10, 2015, set the 2016-2017 goals and percentages as shown below. The Mission Board recommends to the Convention in Florence on November 15, 2016, the following 2017-2018 goals and percentages.

I. COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GOAL	APPROVED 2016-2017 BUDGET		PROJECTED 2017-2018 BUDGET		VARIANCE
A. TOTAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GOAL	\$21,500,000		\$22,000,000		\$500,000
1. SBC CAUSES	\$10,725,000	50.00%	\$11,000,000	50.00%	\$250,000
2. KBC CAUSES	\$10,725,000	50.00%	\$11,000,000	50.00%	\$250,000
B. COOPERATIVE PROGRAM RESOURCING	\$ 1,505,000		\$ 1,540,000		\$ 35,000
1. SBC SHARED FUNDING	\$ 752,500	3.50%	\$ 770,000	3.50%	\$ 17,500
2. KBC SHARED FUNDING	\$ 752,500	3.50%	\$ 770,000	3.50%	\$ 17,500
C. OPERATIONAL BUDGET (c)	\$21,500,000		\$22,000,000		\$500,000
1. SBC CAUSES (a)	\$ 9,997,500	46.50%	\$10,230,000	46.50%	\$232,500
2. KBC CAUSES (b)	\$11,502,500	53.50%	\$11,770,000	53.50%	\$267,500
II. OTHER ESTIMATED INCOME*	\$ 1,717,378				
A. ELIZA BROADUS OFFERING*	\$ 860,500				
B. OTHER*	\$ 856,878				
III. TOTAL KBC BUDGET GOAL*	\$13,219,878				
TOTAL KBC/SBC BUDGET GOAL*	\$23,217,378				



Find information on the 2016 KBC Annual Meeting and Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference at www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting.

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(a) The distribution of these items is voted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

(b) The distribution of these items is voted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board.

(c) Any Cooperative Program receipts in excess of the goal will be distributed at the same percentages.

* Projected 2017-2018 to be approved by the Mission Board upon recommendation of the Business and Finance Committee May 8-9, 2017.

Survey shows Americans love God, Bible, but fuzzy on details

By Bob Smietana

Nashville—Americans apparently don't know much about theology, according to a study released Sept. 28. Most say God wrote the Bible. But they're not sure everything in it is true.

Six in 10 say everyone eventually goes to heaven, but half say only those who believe in Jesus will be saved. And while 7 in 10 say there's only one true God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—two-thirds say God accepts worship of all faiths.

Those are among the findings of a survey of American views on Christian theology from LifeWay Research, who conducted the study in April.

Scott McConnell, executive director of the evangelical research firm, says most Americans still identify as Christians. But they seem to be confused about some of the details of their faith.

For example, he said, about two-thirds of Americans believe Jesus is God while half say Jesus is a being created by God. Those two beliefs don't seem to match, he said.

"Contradictory and incompatible beliefs are okay for most people," McConnell said.

The online survey on theology was sponsored by Orlando-based Ligonier Ministries. Researchers asked 47 questions on topics from prayer and the Bible to heaven and hell.

Among the findings:

Americans think God likes all religions. Two-thirds of Americans (64 percent) say God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Twenty-four percent disagree. Twelve percent are not sure.

Americans of all ages hold this belief, from those 18 to 34 years old (62 percent) to those 50 and older (67 percent). More than half of African-Americans (69 percent), Hispanics (65 percent), whites (63 percent) and Asian-Americans (57 percent) agree.

The one holdout: Americans with evangelical beliefs (48 percent), who are less likely than Americans who don't have evangelical beliefs (67 percent) to hold this view.

Evangelical believers say hell is for real. Other Americans aren't so sure.

Eighty-four percent of those who hold evangelical beliefs say hell is a place of eternal judgment, where God sends all people who do not personally trust in Jesus Christ. Only 30 percent of Americans who don't have evangelical beliefs hold that view.

Overall, fewer than half (40 percent) of Americans say those who don't believe in Jesus will go to hell.

Many evangelical believers say everybody goes to heaven. They also believe that only those who trust Jesus as their Savior are saved.

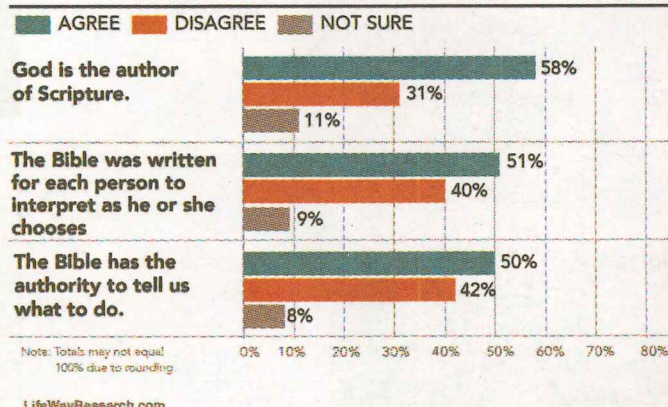
Two-thirds of those with evangelical beliefs (64 percent) say heaven is a place where all people will ultimately be reunited with their loved ones.

That's slightly higher than Americans in general (60 percent).

By definition, all those with evangelical beliefs affirm that only people who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation. Overall, about half of Americans (54 percent) say only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone receive eternal salvation.

American Theological Views:

THE BIBLE



Everybody sins but it's no big deal.

Americans admit they aren't perfect. But they give each other the benefit of the doubt. Two-thirds (65 percent) agree that everyone sins a little, but most people are good by nature. More than half (57 percent) say it would be fair for God to show His wrath against sin. But that wrath seems to be reserved only for the worst sinners.

Three-quarters (74 percent) of Americans disagree with the idea that even the smallest sin deserves eternal damnation. That includes almost two-thirds (62 percent) who strongly disagree.

The resurrection really happened. But not everything else in the Bible did. More than half of Americans (58 percent) say God is the author of the Bible. About half say the Bible alone is the written Word of God (52 percent). Two-thirds of Americans (64 percent) say the biblical accounts of the physical (bodily) resurrection of Jesus are completely accurate. A quarter (23 percent) disagree. Thirteen percent are not sure. Almost all of those with evangelical beliefs (98 percent) agree, as do more than half of Americans who do not hold evangelical beliefs (56 percent).

Fewer than half of Americans (47 percent) say the Bible is 100 percent accurate in all it teaches. Forty-three percent disagree. Ten percent are not sure.

Americans are also split over whether the Bible is literally true. Just under half (44 percent) say the Bible contains helpful myths but isn't literally true. Forty-five percent disagree. Half of Americans (51 percent) say the Bible was written for each person to interpret as he or she chooses. Forty percent disagree. Nine percent are not sure.

Americans believe in the Trinity. But it's complicated. Seven out of 10 Americans (69 percent) agree there is one true God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Six in 10 say Jesus is both divine and human (61 percent).

But they're fuzzy on the details of the Trinity. More than half (52 percent) say Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God. And 56 percent say the Holy Spirit is a force rather than a person. The Holy Spirit seems to be particularly confusing: A quarter (28 percent) say the Spirit is a divine being but not equal to God the Father and Jesus. Half (51 percent) disagree. Twenty-one percent are not sure.

Americans disagree about sex, abortion, homosexuality and gender. About

half of Americans (49 percent) say sex outside of traditional marriage is a sin. Forty-four percent say it's not a sin. Seven percent are not sure.

Forty-nine percent say abortion is a sin. Forty percent say it is not. Eleven percent are not sure. Almost 4 in 10 (38 percent) say gender identity is a matter of choice. Half (51 percent) disagree. One in 10 (11 percent) is not sure.

Forty-two percent of Americans say the Bible's condemnation of homosexual behavior doesn't apply today. Forty-four percent disagree. Fourteen percent are not sure.

Women (53 percent) are more likely than men (45 percent) to say sex outside of marriage is a sin. Those who are high school grads or less (56 percent) are more likely to agree than those with bachelor's degrees (44 percent) or graduate degrees (40 percent). Those with evangelical beliefs (91 percent) are more than twice as likely to agree as those who do not have evangelical beliefs (40 percent).

Americans with evangelical beliefs (87 percent) are more likely to say abortion is a sin than other Americans (41 percent). They are also less likely (32 percent) to say gender identity is a choice than other Americans (40 percent).

Personal salvation takes work. Three-quarters of Americans (77 percent) say people must contribute their own effort for personal salvation. Half of Americans (52 percent) say good deeds help them

earn a spot in heaven. Sixty percent agree that Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of their sin.

Withholding communion is frowned upon. Sixty-two percent of churchgoers disagree with the statement, "My local church has the authority to withhold the Lord's Supper from me and exclude me from the fellowship of the church." Twenty-nine percent agree. Nine percent are not sure.

Men are more likely to agree (32 percent) than women (27 percent). Churchgoers with household incomes over \$100,000 (65 percent) are more likely to disagree than those with incomes less than \$25,000 (56 percent).

Those with evangelical beliefs (38 percent) are more likely to say a church can withhold communion or exclude people than churchgoers who do not hold evangelical beliefs (25 percent).

Most Americans don't buy the prosperity gospel—especially if they have money. Two-thirds (63 percent) disagree with the idea that God will always reward true faith with material blessings. A quarter agree. Twelve percent are not sure.

Men (28 percent) are more likely to believe in the prosperity gospel than women (22 percent). Poor Americans—those with incomes under \$25,000—are more likely (28 percent) to agree than those with incomes over \$100,000 (20 percent).

Those with high school degrees or less (33 percent) are more likely to believe that God blesses the faithful with material blessings than those with graduate degrees (18 percent).

Americans with evangelical beliefs (37 percent) are most likely to agree with the prosperity gospel. Americans who do not hold evangelical beliefs are more skeptical (23 percent).

McConnell said Christian theology is both simple and complicated. Most Americans agree with simple truths like "Jesus arose" and "Jesus saves," he said, but few believe they need saving or they are not good by nature.

"Basic Christian theology is easy to find on a church's beliefs webpage, yet most Americans don't understand how the pieces are related," he said. (BP)



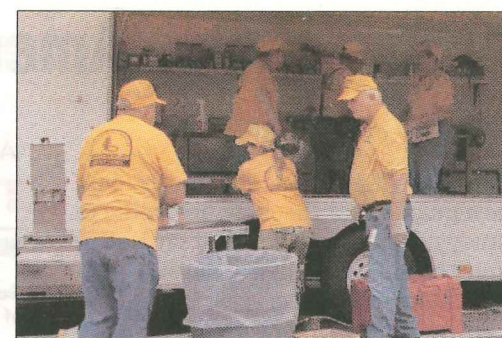
"The story of God's amazing work in the hills of southeastern Kentucky must be told and the Western Recorder helps us do just that."

Larry Gritton, president
Oneida Baptist Institute





Left and Right: Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers are preparing hot meals for storm evacuees in Florida. (Photo provided by Florida Baptist Convention.)



Hurricane

Continued from Page 1

the gospel while serving areas of need."

At least two professions of faith were made in the North Jacksonville Baptist Church parking lot.

"One young man showed up from the community to help erect the tent that KBDR was using," Coram said. "It was a tough tent to put together as it was so large, yet after helping with the tent the man stayed to learn why we were all doing what we were doing. He gave his heart to Christ from that experience."

The other profession of faith was from a volunteer with another organization who came from South Dakota to help Hurricane Matthew survivors.

The 45 KBDR volunteers manning the mobile kitchens, shower units and chain-saw equipment arrived later than expected due to unanticipated amounts of traffic, yet still reached Jacksonville by nightfall with enough time to begin serving those suffering from the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew the next day. The first meal served was chicken tenders, stewed potatoes and corn to a hungry lot of 3,000 hurricane survivors.

"The staff at North Jacksonville Baptist Church helped us out and have been nothing but gracious and accommodating to us as we serve their community of 3,000 hurricane survivors," said Kentucky volunteer Carolyn Gray. "They've fed us, the volunteers, as we've fed people, and they helped us identify streets and neighborhoods in Jacksonville that were hit the hardest."

North Jacksonville Baptist is currently one of three Southern Baptist Disaster Relief feeding sites in Florida. The other sites include First Baptist Church (Flagler) in Palm Coast, Fla., and Turning Point Baptist Church in St. Augustine, Fla.

"We've been told that things may slow down soon for our site in Jacksonville as people make their way home," Gray noted. "We may soon begin the trek north to aid SBDR teams there."

Currently, SBDR volunteers from nine states are involved in the response, including Indiana, Ohio, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. Volunteers from Mississippi and Tennessee are prepared to respond as assessments determine the areas of greatest need.

Coram, who is back home after three days and only dealing with a neighborhood power outage, is simply thankful that Hurricane Matthew's damage wasn't as extensive as projections made it out to be.

"We're all grateful that, in our community, no lives were lost," Coram said. "And, we continue to pray for the families of those who lost their lives in Haiti, as well as for the volunteers and people's safety in other more affected areas hurt by Hurricane Matthew." (BP)

DR volunteers serving Matthew survivors in five states

By Joe Conway

Alpharetta, Ga.—While Matthew was still churning up the U.S. eastern seaboard as a Category 4 hurricane, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers were already preparing hot meals for storm evacuees in Florida.

Meal preparation will soon number in the thousands as multiple teams and kitchens from other states are in operation.

Meanwhile, SBDR assessors are working in coastal communities from Florida to Virginia coordinating first responses for cleanup, mud out and recovery.

"The heartbreaking thing is that we are talking about the same communities in South Carolina that flooded earlier this year," said North American Mission Board SBDR executive director Mickey Caison. "In North Carolina these are the same communities that just completed their long-term recovery from Hurricane Floyd. They are flooded again."

NAMB Send Relief vice president David Melber shares Caison's concern. He called for prayers for those affected by the storm.

"We are experiencing historic

widespread damage from Florida to Virginia," Melber said. "Our greatest need is for prayer that God would direct and coordinate all we do in response. I am so thankful for the Disaster Relief network, and in particular the leadership in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia. We have a network of volunteers in motion and resources coming from many states."

"This crisis is a great opportunity to see churches empowered to serve and minister to the thousands in need," he added. "We are grateful for the support in resources, both volunteer and financial."

Caison said SBDR will be preparing as many as 100,000 meals per day.

"We currently have volunteers from seven states involved in the response, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia," Caison said.

Volunteers from Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas are traveling to their areas of service and are prepared to respond as assessments determine the areas of greatest need, Caison noted.

Kitchen operations are currently located at First Baptist Church of Flagler in Palm Coast, Fla.; Turning Point

Baptist Church in St. Augustine, Fla.; North Jacksonville Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla.; Southside Baptist Church in Savannah, Ga.; Northside Baptist Church in Brunswick, Ga.; North Conway Baptist Church in Conway, S.C.; First Baptist Church in Harleyville, S.C.; and Hoffmeyer Road Baptist Church in Florence, S.C.

Most of the rivers and streams were not expected to crest until Wednesday, Oct. 12, so assessors would not know the full extent of some of the flood damage until the end of the week, Caison said. "Assessors will be working at least for another week" in the days following the storm.

Caison noted that the year has been exceptionally taxing for volunteers with widespread flooding, tornadoes, wildfires and other disasters.

"This is an excellent opportunity for spontaneous volunteers to join with trained teams and serve," Caison said. "This is going to be a large and long response. We need the help."

Those wishing to donate to SBDR relief can contact the Baptist convention in their state for phone donations, call 1-866-407-NAMB (6262) or mail checks to NAMB, P.O. Box 116543, Atlanta, GA 30368-6543. (BP)



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FOR LIFE**

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Grace Fellowship Church,
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Tickets: \$15
Guest Speaker: Adam Greenway,
dean Billy Graham School of
Missions, Evangelism and Ministry



Baptist Evangelical Church of Porrier in Jean Rabel, Haiti was devastated in Hurricane Matthew's wrath. (Photo provided by Florida Baptist Convention)

Hurricane-hit Haiti, Cuba draw Baptist relief

By Margaret Colson

Port-Au-Prince, Haiti—Florida Baptists are already onsite providing aid in Haiti, where nearly 1,000 people have died from Hurricane Matthew and scores more are sickened by cholera in the storm's aftermath.

Craig Culbreth, the Florida Baptist Convention's lead catalyst for missions and ministries, said the state's Disaster Relief volunteers are already on the ground assessing need and strategizing response.

"We are hoping we can have a response and help those people in the south end" of the island where there is heavy devastation, he said in a videotaped interview from Haiti. Many of the dead are being buried in mass graves, he said, and cholera is spreading quickly from contaminated water.

"Although the largest population center in Haiti, Port-au-Prince, escaped major damage from Hurricane Matthew, the southern areas of Haiti were devastated," reported Culbreth.

In the southern part of Haiti, UNICEF estimates that up to 80 percent of the homes are damaged and nearly 16,000 people are staying in temporary shelters. Some 1.4 million people in Haiti need humanitarian assistance, the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said.

Confraternite Missionnaire Baptiste de Haiti ministry director DeLouis LaBranche has been in contact with pastors in the affected southwest region near Les Cayes. Although the numbers may increase, his initial estimates are that about 100 to 200 churches and 5,000 homes lost their roofs, 2,000 houses flooded, and nine people died in the locality of Cavaillon. In other areas, as many as 20,000-30,000 have lost their homes, he said.

Baptist Global Response, a Southern Baptist humanitarian group, is monitoring several Southern Baptist state conventions in their outreach to Haiti, and stands ready to help provide funding upon request.

"Although Haiti has sustained damage, a large number of Baptist partners and NGOs are already entrenched there

and are currently responding," Jeff Palmer, BGR executive director, told Baptist Press.

BGR area directors are currently on their way to Cuba to evaluate damage with local partners and will be visiting and following up with Haiti partners in the next few weeks, the group said.

BGR has approved \$100,000 for aid to Cuba, and is assessing damage in the Caribbean to determine the best use of donations there, BGR said. "We are working through an established network of churches and partners in (Cuba), and we feel our efforts will have the most impact there," Palmer said.

Although firsthand news reports are spotty due to the widespread devastation, messages and pleas for help from pastors are slowly beginning to trickle in to Florida Baptists, who have ministered in Haiti for more than 20 years.

Baptist Evangelical Church of Porrier in Jean Rabel, served by pastor Garry Tanélus, reportedly has been devastated, along with most homes in the surrounding community. The area's livestock has been washed away and its vegetation destroyed, Haiti leader Jean Garry Auguste said in an email.

Haitians depend heavily on livestock and gardens for daily provisions, Culbreth said.

Florida Baptists in partnership with the CMBH arranged for rice and water to be delivered to the island's hardest hit areas.

As Culbreth makes his way to the south side of Haiti in the coming days, seeking to discover "just where God wants us to serve," he voices a realistic resolve, "We can't solve all problems, but we can make a difference in the lives of many. We are hoping to use this as an opportunity to overcome obstacles."

Disaster Relief volunteers may be enlisted in the coming days to travel to Haiti to offer the hope of Christ amid the devastation, Culbreth said.

The CMBH has approximately 1,726 congregations with 184,678 members and 335,500 in worship attendance. In 2015, CMBH churches planted 110 new congregations, led 59,324 people to Christ and baptized 35,557 new believers. (BP)



BHM campuses see only light damage, but area churches not as fortunate

Louisville—In the wake of devastation and death in Haiti caused by Hurricane Matthew, Baptist Haiti Mission leaders are thankful that there was not considerable damage to buildings at the three campuses of Baptist Haiti Mission, a partner with Crossings Ministries and the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

However, many churches in the ASE-BACH association, which has worked alongside BHM for the last 70 years and consists of more than 350 churches, are reporting extensive damage to their properties and communities. Throughout the years, Baptist Haiti Mission has transformed their role with the association from planting churches to serving and equipping them.

At least 30 churches and schools within the association have sustained substantial damage, hundreds of people were left without homes, there were several deaths, and many people have lost their gardens and animals, Baptist Haiti Mission's reports said.

BHM's northernmost campus, near the town of Atrel, was among the hardest hit. Kyrk, the BHM missionary that lives in the area, has been assessing needs of the churches and communities. The list is still growing.

"As disastrous as an event like this

is, we recognize God's sovereignty and the opportunity this is to build up the churches and reach the nation with the gospel of Jesus Christ," BHM representatives said.

"The leaders of these churches, which are located all over the country (except the southern peninsula), have the network in place to put resources in the hands of those who need them," BHM officials said of the need in Haiti.

"Furthermore, locals are willing and able to work to rebuild their homes and communities. Therefore, the need is not to have volunteers on the ground, but rather to have funds to buy needed materials and help local people who are already working hard to help their neighbors," BHM officials added.

"However, we can take heart, because the resources required to meet all of the spiritual needs that we know about hung on a cross 2,000 years ago and cannot be bought with money," they added.

To help with relief efforts in Haiti, go to www.bhm.org or send checks or chlorine tablets to Baptist Haiti Mission, 13420 Eastpoint Centre Drive, Louisville, KY 40223. (WR)

Devin Norton, BHM intern, contributed to this article.

Sunday School Studies for Adults and Young Adults

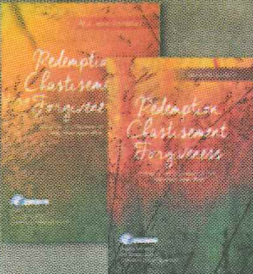
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Young Adult
(Studies for ages 13-15)

Pew Research finds Americans divided over religious liberty

By David Roach

Nashville—A Pew Research Center report suggesting deep division between Americans who support religious liberty and those who support so-called sexual liberty has drawn critique for its framing of issues related to contraception, same-sex marriage and transgenderism.

At the same time, the report has drawn praise as generally reflective of the cultural moment.

A survey released Sept. 28 found 67 percent of the 4,538 Americans polled said employers with religious objections to contraception should nonetheless be required to provide it in their employee health insurance plans.

Approximately half (49 percent) of those surveyed said wedding-related businesses should be required to provide services to same-sex couples even if the business owners possess religious objections. A similar percentage (51 percent) said transgender individuals should be allowed to use restrooms corresponding with their so-called gender identity.

Bill Donohue, a sociologist who serves as president of the Catholic League, said Pew's data indicates less support for religious liberty than some other surveys because "the wording of the question strongly influences the respondent's answer."

Pew asked respondents to choose between upholding religious liberty and requiring equal treatment in various scenarios, according to the report. In contrast,

Donohue cited a December study by the Associated Press and the independent research organization NORC that merely asked whether respondents supported religious liberty.

The latter survey found 82 percent support of religious liberty protections for Christians.

"When Americans are asked about their support for religious liberty in general—when there is no competing value they are asked to weigh—their commitment shines through," Donohue said in a news release. "But in the real world, there is usually a conflict between rights."

Donohue added, "Americans prize religious liberty but they also support equal treatment. When those values conflict, much depends on whether the respondent is being asked to defend

government coercion or support equal treatment: the former is not popular, but the latter is."

Among Pew's findings about specific religious groups:

- A majority (53 percent) of white evangelical Protestants said employers with religious objections should be allowed to refuse to provide contraception coverage. Some 32 percent of Catholics, 23 percent of black Protestants and 15 percent of religiously unaffiliated individuals agreed.

- A full 77 percent of white evangelical Protestants said businesses should be allowed to refuse provision of wedding services to same-sex couples based on religious objections. Forty-eight percent of black Protestants agreed along with 43 percent of Catholics and 33 percent of the religiously unaffiliated.

- Regarding restroom usage, 69 percent of white evangelical Protestants said transgender people should be required to use facilities corresponding to their "birth gender." Forty-seven percent of black Protestants, 50 percent of Catholics and 28 percent of the religiously unaffiliated agreed.

The Pew report's statistics regarding Catholics may be misleading, Donohue stated, because Pew did not distinguish between practicing and non-practicing Catholics—a critique that presumably applies to statements about other religious groups as well.

Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, agreed that the framing of questions can affect the level of support for religious liberty.

"If we put religious liberties up for a popular vote, we will not always be pleased with the result," Mohler said Sept. 29 on his podcast The Briefing, "because Americans are quite easily persuaded one way or the other by any number of factors, including exactly how this kind of question is even framed."

The framing of Pew's question about contraception in particular, Mohler said, could have affected survey results.

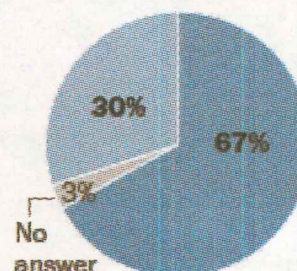
"It is claimed that Americans are basically now of one mind in terms of religious liberty on the contraception issues," Mohler said. "But this avoids a huge problem with the way that's framed." In cases like Hobby Lobby's lawsuit before the U.S. Supreme Court, "the big issue actually wasn't just contraception, but specific forms of contraception"

Broad consensus on contraception coverage, but public more divided over wedding services for same-sex couples, bathrooms for transgender people

If you had to choose, which comes closest to your view?

Employers who have a religious objection to the use of birth control should be ...

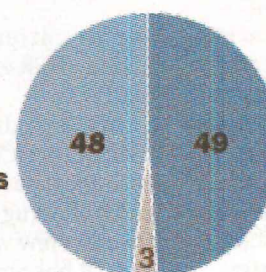
... able to refuse to provide it in health insurance plans for their employees



... required to provide it in health insurance plans for their employees just as other employers are required to do

Businesses that provide wedding services should be ...

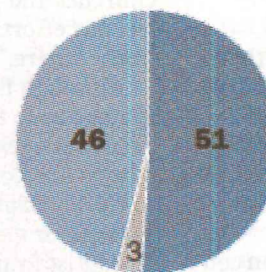
... able to refuse to provide those services to same-sex couples if the business owner has religious objections to homosexuality



... required to provide those services to same-sex couples just as they would to all other customers

Transgender people should be ...

... required to use the public restrooms of the gender they were born into



... allowed to use the public restrooms of the gender with which they currently identify

not mentioned by Pew which have "an abortifacient effect."

In the end, however, Donohue and Mohler say the survey rightly reflects America's division regarding religious liberty.

"The greatest insight and affirmation from this research is that the basic divide in this country is theological

rather than merely political or even merely moral," Mohler said.

He noted that weekly attendance of religious services increases a person's likelihood of supporting religious liberty related to contraception and wedding services, according to Pew, and of supporting the restriction of restroom usage based on biology. (BP)

Judge Moore suspension in Alabama ignores 'rule of law'

By David Roach

Montgomery, Ala.—Although the nine-judge panel charged with trying Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore did not achieve the unanimous ruling required to remove him from office, it suspended him without pay for the remainder of his term in what Moore's attorney Mat Staver called a violation of state law.

"To suspend Chief Justice Moore for the rest of his term is the same as removal," Staver, founder and chairman of the nonprofit legal group Liberty Counsel, said in a release. The Court of the Judiciary charged with trying Moore, "lacked the unanimous votes to remove the Chief, so the majority instead chose to ignore the law and the rules."

Joe Godfrey, executive director of the Alabama Citizens Action Program, the Alabama Baptist Convention's public policy auxiliary, told Baptist Press the ruling seems to reflect "forces at work that seek to silence (Christians') freedom of speech and religious liberties."

The vote to remove Moore from office allegedly was 6-3, according to a report relayed by Godfrey from the Alabama Citizens Action Program's attorney.

In its Sept. 30 ruling, the COJ stated there is "clear and convincing" evidence Moore was "completely disregarding" a federal court injunction when he told Alabama's 68 probate judges in a Jan. 6 memo they had "a ministerial duty not to issue any marriage licenses contrary to" the state's ban on same-sex marriage

until the Alabama Supreme Court clarified the relationship between state law and the U.S. Supreme Court's decision legalizing same-sex marriage.

The COJ's ruling was handed down two days after a trial in Montgomery that drew spectators from as far away as Illinois and Missouri.

At his trial, Moore argued his Jan. 6 memo was merely a status update and did not defy any federal court order. The COJ's 50-page ruling, however, stated Moore's claim was not "credible."

Moore's memo, the COJ stated, "can be reasonably read as requiring defiance of the United States Supreme Court and the district court" that required probate judges to grant licenses to same-sex couples. (BP)



Roy Moore

InterVarsity reaffirms theology on sexuality

By Diana Chandler

Madison, Wisc.—InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA has reaffirmed its long-standing theology limiting sexual relations to heterosexual married couples, and said gay employees and others who disagree theologically will likely feel compelled to leave the ministry.

But Greg Jao, the interdenominational college student ministry's vice president and director of campus engagement, said a Time report of people being "fired" for disagreeing was misleading.

Rather, Jao said, InterVarsity is trying to avoid a "don't ask, don't tell" protocol by asking employees to self-disclose any disagreement. Those who do might be given time to study the policy, he said, but the ministry "will begin a process of termination" if employees persist in disagreement.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender employees and others may remain with the company if they affirm InterVarsity's theological beliefs.

"InterVarsity is concluding a four-year process in which we reiterated our beliefs on human sexuality and invited our staff to study and to reflect on how our beliefs about Scripture and our hermeneutic approaches to Scripture lead us to those conclusions," Jao said. "We recognize

employees who disagree, or whose beliefs have changed over time, will leave employment because we have reiterated our beliefs. ... Within InterVarsity and elsewhere, there are (LGBT) people who agree with this theology, at great personal cost. We are learning together to follow Jesus."

Jao, in an email to Time, identified any employees' decision to leave in response to the policy as "involuntary terminations due to misalignment with InterVarsity ministry principles."

He told Baptist Press four or five employees had self-disclosed their opposition and voluntarily left, and he expects some others will do the same.

"The vast majority of our staff, while they are experiencing some pain over the loss of colleagues, have said, 'No, this actually reflects what we've always taught, always believed, and I always expected my teammates were on board with,'" Jao said.

Southern Baptist leaders have come to InterVarsity's defense.

Contrary to secular society, Christians should not be shocked by InterVarsity's policy, said Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission President Russell Moore.

"The policy does not apply to students who participate in InterVarsity chapters on 667 college campuses nationwide, InterVarsity said. (BP)

LifeWay adding new long-term study on making disciples

Nashville—This fall LifeWay Christian Resources is launching a new long-term study designed to "make disciples who make disciples."

"Disciples Path: The Journey" is a one-year small group study that focuses on helping both new and existing believers understand and apply core Christian doctrines to become more mature disciples.

"Discipleship is one of those things we talk a lot about in the church, but many times we have difficulty putting it into practice," said Michael Kelley, director of groups ministry at LifeWay.

For that reason, LifeWay introduced a series of short-term studies called Disciples Path last year and is expanding it this fall into "Disciples Path: The Journey for a more long-term approach."

"With Disciples Path," he said, "we wanted to provide a simple tool that equips people well to make disciples."

Each study in Disciples Path lasts five to six weeks and builds on the previous ones, Kelley said. "At the end, not only will people have moved

forward in their spiritual journey, they will be ready to bring others along in that same journey."

After hearing from those who have used the short-term study, leaders at LifeWay realized there was a need and desire for a longer, more comprehensive study using those same discipleship principles.

In creating The Journey, LifeWay developed four volumes that take participants through the life and work of Christ and into responsibilities of Christians. "A church can set aside a year, put all their groups on the same page, and walk through an intentional pathway of discipleship," Kelley said.

Each of the four volumes has 13 sessions that allow for group discussion, but also application and activities for participants to do in their personal time between meetings. The Bible studies, Kelley noted, encourage leaders to model a biblical life in front of and alongside group participants, who can then follow the leader's example and make disciples themselves. (BP)

NAMB trustees see Denver's beauty, vast spiritual need

By Mike Ebert

Denver—Set against a backdrop of freshly snow-capped mountains on the front range of Colorado's Rockies, North American Mission Board trustees saw firsthand how Southern Baptist church planters are countering spiritual darkness in the midst of a recreational paradise.

On the Monday before their Oct. 4-5 meeting, trustees loaded onto buses to visit church planters at their places of ministry. One, Kevin Hasenack, is planting Calvary Church Denver in one of the most diverse communities in the area.

"One in four people here were born outside the United States," Hasenack told trustees. "We are located close to the largest mosque in Colorado. We hosted a soccer camp this summer and most of the 40 kids who participated were Muslim."

The greater Denver area, one of NAMB's 32 Send Cities with a population of 4.3 million, consistently shows up in the top 15 on several "Fastest Growing Cities" lists. Only 12 percent of the population is affiliated with an evangelical church while 63 percent say they are unaffiliated with any religious body.

At a Monday evening dinner before trustees began their meetings, Ed Stetzer affirmed NAMB's emphasis on evangelistic church planting as the most effective way of reaching cities like Denver.

"The best thing that a Southern Baptist mission (board) can do in North America today is to specifically focus on church planting," Stetzer told the gathering of trustees as well as local church planters. "Ultimately it's because men and women need to hear the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Stetzer, who heads Wheaton College's Billy Graham Center for Evangelism, affirmed the turnaround at NAMB that



NAMB trustees pray for Kevin Hasenack (center) who is planting Calvary Church Denver in one of the most diverse communities in the area. Trustees visited several Denver-area church planters on the eve of their Oct. 4-5 meeting in Denver. (Photo by Hayley Catt/NAMB)

has taken place in recent years.

"Seriously, I am stunned at the amount of focus that the North American Mission Board has brought to church planting. And what's happening today is people are coming up to me and saying 'So tell me, what are Southern Baptists doing? We want to learn from you.'"

After committee meetings Tuesday, NAMB's full trustee meeting began Wednesday with a devotional by SBC President Steve Gaines, pastor of the Memphis-area Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn.

Gaines began by asking, "Does prayer make a difference?" Using Daniel's prayer recorded in Daniel 9:4-17 as a model, Gaines said prayer matters because it moves the hand of God, it reveals the will of God and it blesses the heart of God.

"The church was birthed in a prayer meeting, not a business meeting," Gaines said. "What could God do with the North American Mission Board? What could God do with the Southern Baptist

Convention if we would realize that the primary thing we are to do before we do anything else is pray."

Trustees approved several actions during the sessions:

- an increase in NAMB's 2016-17 capital budget to allow for needed maintenance and improvements at its Alpharetta, Ga., building.

- a \$10 million allocation from investment reserves for research and development that will allow NAMB to test new ministry sites and approaches, especially in cities where access to ministry sites is limited.

- a resolution congratulating Gateway Seminary on the occasion of dedicating its new facility in Southern California was also approved.

In his president's address, Kevin Ezell highlighted several ways NAMB is continuing to help focus Southern Baptists on evangelism including its Engage 24 workshops for pastors and a citywide crusade to be part of Crossover Phoenix in June 2017.

Ramp-up of NAMB's Send Relief ministry continues, Ezell said. Plans for 2017 include feasibility studies for two or more Send Relief ministry hubs; a safe house for women who have escaped human trafficking; providing Send Relief training labs and continuing to focus on drawing in a younger generation of Send Relief volunteers.

Ezell also demonstrated a new online Cooperative Program Calculator that allows users to select a state Baptist convention, insert a dollar amount and then see how their money is used inside and outside the state.

"So as a pastor you know where every dollar of your Cooperative Program money goes," Ezell said.

Ezell ended by sharing a new emphasis NAMB will start promoting in 2017.

"I appreciate so much Dr. Gaines' emphasis on prayer this morning," he said. "In 2017 that's going to be our emphasis at NAMB—to get at least 10,000 churches that will commit to pray—just pray—for church plants." (BP)

The saints of Oneida—far and near

The months of September and October typically bring the opportunity for me to travel our great state from nearly end-to-end sharing about God's work at Oneida. I am grateful for the privilege of sharing in the annual meetings of many of our

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

state's associations. It is always a joy to meet new folks and to also say thank you to old friends who have known and loved Oneida for many years.

One of our trips this year took our assistant to the president and me to Leitchfield and Grayson County. There were so many Oneida friends and connections in this small association of churches, and it was a tremendous blessing to connect with so many fine folks. The following evening I was scheduled to speak at the Russell County annual meeting, so we had planned to stay on the road until that meeting was complete. We had

not booked any hotel room, and during the dessert fellowship after the Grayson County meeting, a gentleman approached us and asked if we needed a place to stay. We were glad to accept his offer, and after a good night's rest, headed back out on the road. We had a couple of appointments to see folks, but were open to anything the Lord had for us that day.

While visiting a church, we discovered some former, long-time Oneida staff members lived just around the corner from the church. We eventually found John and Hannah Sanderson, who served at Oneida for 20 years. We were unannounced in our visit, but they graciously visited with us for an hour or so. It was a blessing to hear about their time at Oneida, but also what God has done in their lives and ministry since leaving OBI.

Our next stop was to another former Oneida laborer. We visited with Oliver Hawkins Sr. in Springfield. This wonderful man of God, along with his wife, Joy, served faithfully in the

Oneida ministry for 25 years. Mr. Hawkins taught my father in school. My father taught Oliver Jr. in school, and then he taught me in school. Like the Sandersons, his words were an encouragement for us to continue serving at Oneida just as he had.

We eventually made our way to Russell County for an excellent meeting of some Kentucky Baptists who know, love and support the Lord's work at OBI. We returned home around 11 p.m. It was a long couple of days, but it was also a good reminder of the many saints God has raised up over the many years to ensure that the work of Oneida reaches young people from all over the world. Some folks labor right here in the Oneida trenches, and others come alongside those efforts to assist them from afar. May the Lord bless the many folks who have given of themselves for God's work at Oneida.

Larry Gritton Jr. is president of Oneida Baptist Institute. Website: oneidaschool.org. Phone: (606) 847-4111.

Student thankful for Clear Creek community

New student Terry Burtchell was committed to doing whatever it took to get his family to Clear Creek, all the way from Troy, Texas.

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

"I received Christ as my Savior when I was 12 and God called me to the ministry when I was 17," said Burtchell. "After graduating high school my church sent me to Bible college in Missouri. I was young and afraid and I came home a few months later. I didn't return to school or the ministry. I always felt I had let God down and was unworthy." "For years I fought the urge to return to ministry and tried to find happiness in my work," said Burtchell. "One day my wife Brandy said, 'You haven't found what you're looking for in any job.

Maybe you should stop searching and do what God called you to do a long time ago.' I agreed and we started looking for Christian colleges. Brandy came across Clear Creek, and it was everything we were looking for even with family housing. I didn't even know family housing existed."

"I talked to the admissions office and started the process to get accepted as a student. When we received our acceptance letters, we began planning a campus visit. The finances we were planning on using for the trip fell through, and we thought we were going to have to cancel the trip. We prayed about it and told God we were committed and would move the 1,029 miles sight unseen if that's what He was asking us to do. Two days later the finances we needed for the trip came through."

"Our visit to Clear Creek was even better than we had expected," said Burtchell. "After returning home we put our house on the market. We received an offer, accepted it, and were under contract within six hours of listing our home. Our move went very smoothly, although it was hard and a little scary when we had everything we own in the moving truck and were saying good bye to our family. Once we arrived at Clear Creek all our fears were washed away, and we both knew this is exactly where God wants us. Living on campus is a wonderful experience. I know it is temporary but I've never felt more at home. The Clear Creek community is amazing."

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; ccbbc.edu; email: dfox@ccbbc.edu.

Video features Corbin's BREAK ministry

If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video must be even more!

The 2016 state missions videos tell stories of how the Eliza Broadus Offering is used (kywmu.org/ebo/videos). If you have not shown them in your church, choose one and show it as the offering is received. Or, show one during a missions moment time in a service. The videos are undated and can be used any time of the year.

EBO at Work



Joy Bolton

One of the 2016 videos tells the story of BREAK in Corbin. Bible Released-Time Education Association of Kentucky provides BREAK-time outreach to elementary students through the use of two buses equipped for children. Parents grant permission for their children to participate in Bible learning on a BREAK

bus and the results are amazing.

In the video, Beth Arnold shared her thanks for an EBO grant to help BREAK paint a second bus. It was so exciting to receive a note from Beth in mid-September.

"I just wanted to let you know our newly painted BREAK bus has been going to schools the last two weeks. The students have been excited and so pleased to see 'their' bus looking so shiny and pretty. After receiving the EBO grant money, we were still \$3,700 short for the quoted \$10,000 for paint and labor. After saving for three years and getting much closer to our goal, an individual (the man actually painting the bus) personally donated \$1,200, then the painting company wrote off \$2,500 still needed.

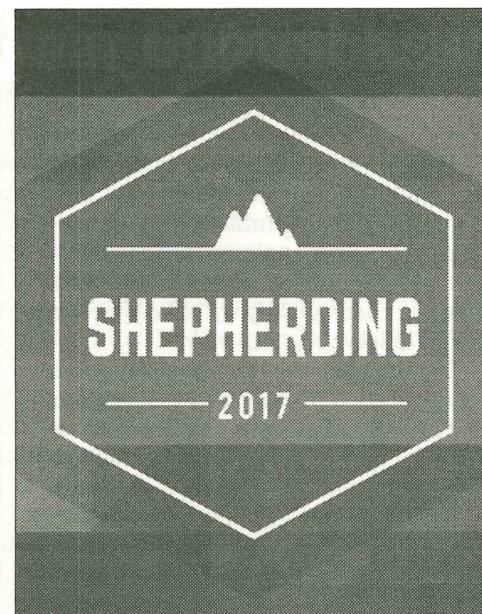
"I really think the EBO grant money pushing us up in reach of the needed amount is what motivated the

generous giving. Thank you!

"The EBO video is really impacting our getting the word out about the ministry. I have been to three churches this month in our county to set up a BREAK display and answer questions after the video was shown. I am also getting calls from outside the Tri-Counties with questions how to start a Bible Release Time in their community. I'm sure I will continue to use the video in sharing about the ministry. I appreciate so much the opportunities EBO has provided for BREAK."

EBO is at work through ministries across Kentucky! May we give generously this year for state missions to reach our goal of \$1,250,000.

Joy Bolton is executive director-treasurer of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, P.O. Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253; (502) 489-3534; kywmu.org



Couples grow closer to God at Shepherding

Louisville—Husband and wife ministry teams can grow closer to God and learn how to be better overseers of the church at Shepherding 2017.

"There is definitely something about Shepherding that resonates with the hearts of pastors and their wives," said KBC Church Consulting and Revitalization Team Leader Steve Rice.

The three-day event draws its name from Acts 20:28, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood."

"When the Apostle Paul sent for the Ephesian elders to meet him in Miletus, he reminded them of the necessity to keep watch over their flocks, but to also keep watch over themselves," Rice said. "The Shepherding conference is designed with that in mind."

The weekend retreat provides a relaxed atmosphere where ministry couples experience renewal, strengthen marital relationships and encounter God through worship and inspirational speakers.

Rice said couples should register soon for the retreat since spots tend to fill up fast. Last year's event drew about 150 couples.

Shepherding 2017 will be held Jan. 26-28 at the Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa in Lexington.

The cost is \$250 per couple and includes lodging and conference materials. All meals except dinner Friday evening are included.

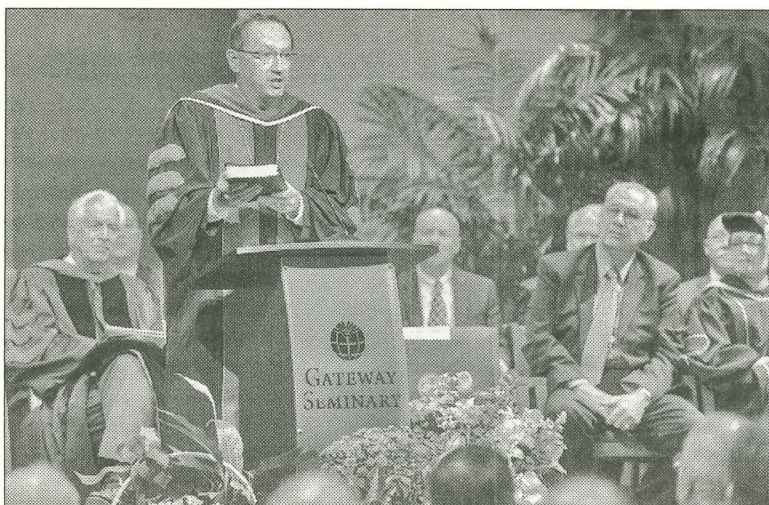
The event is sponsored by Baptist Health and the Kentucky Baptist Convention through gifts to the Cooperative Program.

For more information or to register, visit www.kybaptist.org/shepherding. (KBC)

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Jeff Iorg delivers the keynote address at Gateway Seminary's dedication service.

Gateway celebrates building, blessings

By Katherine Chute

Ontario, Calif.—Gateway Seminary wrapped up two years of transition Oct. 5-8, with a series of dedication events that praised God for His blessings on the institution's recent move.

"Today we celebrate our heritage and stand in awe of God's miraculous activity through us over the past few years," President Jeff Iorg said during the dedication service. "These memories are important to us. But for us, our dreams exceed our memories. Our vision supersedes our heritage. Our longing to experience God's future is more important than celebrating our legacy in our past."

More than 400 people—that included numerous Southern Baptist leaders—attended the dedication, which was streamed live online from the seminary's new chapel.

Iorg summarized the conditions that precipitated the seminary's move 400 miles from the former Mill Valley, Calif., main campus in the San Francisco Bay Area to its new main campus in Ontario, Calif.

"From 2009 through 2013, we endured a prolonged political and legal conflict, along with persistent opposition from some in our community to our development plans for our former campus," he said. "The situation was bleak. We owned a deteriorating campus, in a very challenging location, with significant development restrictions and entrenched community opposition. We were on a trajectory toward closure or worse—a perpetual struggle to preserve our property at the expense of our mission. Frankly, we needed a miracle."

He said that administrators for

several years had interpreted the challenges as barriers to overcome.

"Gradually, God changed our perspective. We came to believe our challenges were not barriers testing our faith, but instead were signposts telling us to go another direction."

Iorg recounted seven miracles which enabled the seminary to relocate its primary campus and launch a new kind of seminary for the 21st century.

For example, the buyer of the Mill Valley property met all the institution's needs in the conditions of the sale, and the building that was purchased was constructed in 2009 but was left unfinished and unoccupied for five years. The seminary also received several large financial gifts, some from donors with no previous connection to the school. In addition, the institution came out of the relocation process debt free with \$123 million in real estate and endowment assets, up from \$32 million just seven years ago.

Outlining his vision for the future, Iorg explained why the decision was made to move to Ontario.

"We moved here because Riverside and San Bernardino counties are the two fastest growing counties in the American West," he said. "By 2050, the population of these two counties is projected to grow by more than 3 million people. That's more population growth in these two counties than will occur in any western state, except Arizona, during the same time frame."

"We established Gateway Seminary where the most people will be moving and living. We are in the perfect place for our ministry-immersion approach to theological education." (BP)

SEBTS seeing continued gain in enrollment

Wake Forest, N.C.—Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary's trustees, along with individuals who support the seminary through the Southeastern Society, held their biannual meetings Oct. 9-11 at the Wake Forest, N.C., campus, receiving updates about the seminary, worshipping together in chapel and fellowshiping with faculty and students.

Danny Akin, in his presidential address to each group, reported that Southeastern Seminary is in its seventh year of record enrollment with 3,550 total students. The current fall semester is the second largest spring enrollment in SEBTS history.

SEBTS faculty also taught nearly 11,000 hours of distance learning courses, Akin reported, while diversity

on campus rose from 8 percent in 2010 to 14.61 percent in 2016, with the seminary looking to increase that percentage every year.

Southeastern also saw a record year for the Southeastern Fund, raising \$1.8 million during the past academic year. More than 650 new donors gave to the Southeastern Fund this year and, overall, more than 900 donors joined the SEBTS family.

During their meetings, the SEBTS trustees gave authorization for SEBTS to enter into a feasibility study to determine the viability of a proposed \$26.5 million capital campaign to build a new student center, increase academic endowments and provide additional student aid. (BP)

Evangelicals for Life: An opportunity to save millions of lives

By Randall Breland

A commitment to life and to its sanctity is much more than a political issue. It is an issue that affects children, mothers, fathers, families and generations. The 1973 Roe v. Wade decision was handed down 43 years ago, and its results are now a cross-generational catastrophe. Since then, children belonging to at least two generations have been murdered.

Ministries like Speak for the Unborn, which began from a sermon preached at Immanuel Baptist Church in Louisville, work every day to stop the cruel murder of unborn children. Speak for the Unborn stands on the sidewalks of 6th and Market Street throughout the week, begging women to go have an ultrasound, commit to keeping their baby, and to explore options like adoption for their child. This is good and necessary gospel work that speaks a word of life into an atmosphere of death.

Yet, we must continually ask the question: Who will carry on the work? Our culture's celebration of death and murder is not just a bygone problem of the 1970s and 1980s. The Guttmacher Institute estimates that nearly 2,000 children are aborted in the U.S. on a daily basis. God makes clear in His Word that life is of inestimable value (Genesis 9:6), that the unborn are children (Psalms 139:13), and that true religion includes caring for orphans and visiting them in their distress (James 1:27). Nearly 2,000 unborn children are in life-threatening distress on

a daily basis.

As we fight for life, it is not enough to show up on a street corner to tell women there are better options. As we stand for children, it is not enough to call our local and national legislators, encouraging them to pass legislation ending abortion. We must do more. In our fight for life, we must also train the next generation to take up the torch and carry the hope of the gospel and its message of life to the culture.

To that end—training the next generation to stand for life—Crossings is taking students to the Evangelicals for Life Conference. Evangelicals for Life is a conference centered around the March for Life and hosted by our ministry partners, the ERLC and Focus on the Family. We are bringing students to attend the conference, join us in breakout sessions designated for youth, and tour our nation's Capitol. This trip is designed to train students on how to combat the culture and fight for life.

Seats are limited. If you are interested in joining us or sending your students on this trip, please contact us at 502-491-7000 or email us at events@gocrossings.org. Will you stand for life?

Statistics from www.numberofabortions.com

Randall Breland is the director of communications for Crossings Ministries.



Historian Haykin elected to SBTS faculty

By Craig Sanders

Louisville—Trustees of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary unanimously approved the election of church historian Michael A.G. Haykin to the faculty during their Oct. 10 meeting.

Messengers also approved a response to a motion on SBC entities' media policies referred from the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June.

"The election of Michael Haykin brings to Southern Seminary's permanent faculty a scholar of world renown and a Christian of such wonderful heart," SBTS President Albert Mohler Jr. said. "He is not only a prolific author and scholar, he is also a man of deep conviction and a teacher who invests personally in his students."

Haykin, professor of church history and biblical spirituality, has taught at Southern since 2008 and serves as director of the seminary's Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies. He has authored or contributed to many books, including "Rediscovering the Church Fathers" and "8 Women of Faith." His election is effective Jan. 1, 2017.

Trustees unanimously approved a response to a referral from the SBC annual meeting in St. Louis requesting "all SBC entities to consider examining their media policies and, if they do not have clearly defined guidelines, to

consider establishing a policy that trustee meetings, including committee meetings, be open to news media."

In its response, the board noted "Southern Seminary is committed to fully cooperating with news media representatives to keep Southern Baptists informed about the work they support through the Cooperative Program." The response clarified all plenary sessions are open to media, and seminary leadership "will do everything within their means to assist members of the media as they endeavor to provide accurate, complete, and fair reporting."

In other business, trustees received positive reports of the seminary's financial position, including the recently concluded 2015-2016 budget year ending with over \$4 million more in revenues than expenses. When asked if the surplus can relieve student debt, Mohler noted that trustee policy designates the money as reserves for the seminary's endowment. He explained the seminary cooperates with no federal or state student loans and any debt students incur is from pre-existing student loans or credit cards.

Trustees also received a report from their executive committee on the election of three new directors of the Southern Seminary Foundation: Darron Byrd of Terry, Miss.; Glenn Hedgespeth of Louisville, Ky.; and James Norman of Searcy, Ark. (SBTS)



October

22 Stuck in Traffic:
Trafficking Awareness
Workshop, Bethlehem
Church, Louisville

November

1 Power Lunch, Ky. Baptist
Building, Louisville
1-3 Salt Lake City Send
City Vision Tour, Salt
Lake City
4 Ministry Assistants'
Workshop, Ky. Baptist
Building, Louisville
5 Kentucky Baptist Disaster
Relief Blue Hat & State
Leaders' Meeting,
Ky. Baptist Building,
Louisville
5-6 BCM International
Conference, Cave City
Convention Center,
Cave City

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

ELKTON—Bellview Church will host the 3rd annual Southern Kentucky Bible Conference on Oct. 23-27 at 6:30 p.m. Preachers include Lloyd Johnson, Don Mathis, Curtis McGehee, Bobby Sellers, James Shutt, David Skinner, Roger Skipworth, Ben Stratton, and Donnie Wilkins. Theme is Christ in the Old Testament. **Rodney Skipworth** is pastor.

IRVINE—Friendship Church will have homecoming Nov. 2. **Chris Miracle** will bring message. **Marion Rogers** is pastor.

LOUISVILLE—Deer Park Church will celebrate homecoming Oct. 30 at 10:45 for worship and a luncheon immediately following. **David Platt** is pastor.

Green Acres Church has called **Jeffery McCarty** as pastor.

MURRAY—Sugar Creek Church will hold a tent revival Oct. 20-22. **Tim Cole** will bring message on Thursday, **Brad Walker** on Friday, and **Brett Miles** on Saturday.

PRINCETON—Cedar Bluff will hold revival Oct. 23-28 with **Presley Lamm** as evangelist. **Mark Faughn** is pastor.

SHELBYVILLE—Buffalo Lick Church has called **Brad Hockensmith** as its pastor.

Highland Church will host the Common Bond Gospel Quartet on Oct. 23 at 6 p.m. **Chris Platt** is pastor.

TYNER—Oak Grove Church called **David Taylor** as pastor.

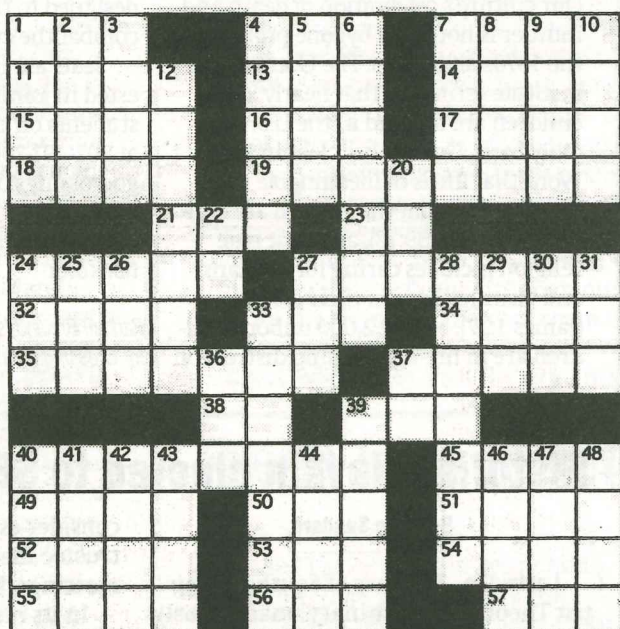
WADDY—Waddy Church will hold fall revival Oct. 28-29 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 30, at 11 a.m. **Tex Selph** is pastor.

WINCHESTER—Providence Church (Clark County) will celebrate homecoming Oct. 23. **Linville Spangler** is pastor.

Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 "Receive his mark in his _____, or in his hand" (Revelation 14:9)
- 7 "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the _____, I am not of the body" (1 Corinthians 12:15)
- 10 Imperial Chemical Industries, abbr.
- 11 "In the day thou wast born thy _____ was not cut" (Ezekiel 16:4)
- 12 Bird's beak
- 13 "Let _____ esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3)
- 14 Speed measurement, abbr.
- 15 Car fuel
- 16 Peruvian beast of burden
- 18 The letter that follows "em"
- 20 East Indies, abbr.
- 21 Either
- 22 "Fall by the _____ of the sword" (Luke 21:24)
- 24 Activity or movement
- 26 Preposition
- 27 Fifteen, Romans num.
- 28 Wing of a building
- 29 "I am escaped with the skin of my _____" (Job 19:20)
- 32 The letter that precedes "em"
- 34 "A man's pride shall bring him _____" (Proverbs 29:23)
- 36 "The government shall be upon his _____" (Isaiah 9:6)
- 40 Midwest state, abbr.
- 41 Negative
- 43 Last, prefix
- 44 Violent group
- 45 Sticky
- 46 "God ... spake in time _____"



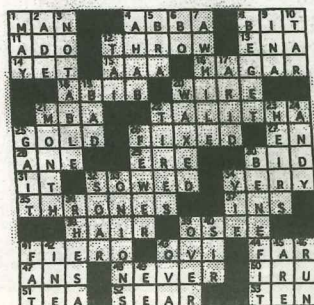
#06

- unto the fathers by the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1)
- 49 First person plural pronoun
- 50 Female, suffix
- 51 Sheep's noise
- 52 And so on, Lat. abbr.
- 53 Verb of being
- 54 "The _____ of every man is Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:3)
- 23 Used-to-be, prefix
- 25 "Love worketh no _____ to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10)
- 26 Exist
- 29 "The _____ is a little member" (James 3:5)
- 30 "Take of his blood ... upon the _____ of their right hand" (Exodus 29:20)
- 31 "_____ is the Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:3)
- 32 Word reviser, abbr.
- 33 "They brake not his _____" (John 19:33)
- 35 First person plural pronoun
- 37 Arizona's neighbor, abbr.
- 38 "Only her _____ moved, but her voice was not heard" (1 Samuel 1:13)
- 39 Rodent
- 42 To drive out
- 47 The remains of burned wood
- 48 "With the _____ bone of an ass ... have I slain a thousand men" (Judges 15:16)
- 50 Printer's measure
- 51 Minister's undergraduate degree, abbr.

Down

- 1 "Jesus ... with his _____ wrote on the ground" (John 8:6)
- 2 The Atlantic or Pacific
- 3 "The Lord God ... took one of his _____, and closed up the flesh" (Genesis 2:21)
- 4 "Thou shalt bruise his _____" (Genesis 3:15)
- 5 "Immediately his feet and _____ bones received strength" (Acts 3:7 O.E. spelling)
- 6 Flower
- 7 Fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet
- 8 Soul, Lat.
- 9 Remove horns
- 17 The widow's _____
- 19 Edward, for short
- 21 Kind of tea
- 22 "Having _____, see ye not?"

#05



D.K. PREACHER'S KIDS

BY DAVID AYERS



CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: The Summersville (Ky.) Church is accepting resumés for a pastor. Summersville is looking for a God-called individual who will lead the church forward and further develop congregation. Send resumés to Summersville Baptist Church, c/o Pulpit Committee, P.O. Box 68, Summersville, KY 42782.

SEEKING: Seeking called praise and worship leader, willing vessel, to fulfill the call of Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:16 to lead His flock at Pleasant Grove Church, www.pgbc.net.

SEEKING: First Church of Paintsville, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. First Baptist is an established church desiring to reach the community for Christ and grow in Him. Candidates should have a minimum of a Bible college education while seminary training is preferred. Please submit resumés to fbcpaintsville@att.net.

SEEKING: Children's ministry position at Grace Church, Louisville, 10-15 hours per week. Experience preferred but not required. K-5. Send resumé to don@grace-lou.com

SEEKING: First Baptist Church in Providence, Ky., is seeking a part-time bivocational pastor. Responsibilities include Sunday morning services and Wednesday nights. No parsonage is available. Send resumés to Linda Hutton, 12695 Nebo Rd., Providence, KY 42450.

SEEKING: Boones Creek Association is seeking a full-time DOM. Please send resumés to P.O. Box 537, Winchester, KY 40392. Deadline for resumés is Nov. 1.

SEEKING: Spring Bayou Church in Kevil, Ky. is in search of a new bivocational worship leader. Interested candidates may submit their resumé and video of a worship service to Spring Bayou Baptist Church, 1205 Woodville Rd., Kevil, KY 42053. Email is sbbc@brtc.net.

SEEKING: Piano/keyboard player wanted. Blackjack Church in Franklin, Ky. is seeking someone for its weekly worship services. Email resumés to blackjackbaptist_franklin@yahoo.com or mail resumés to Blackjack Baptist Church, P.O. Box 555, Franklin, KY 42135.

SEEKING: Music director. Blackjack Church in Franklin, Ky., is seeking a dedicated self-motivated person with leadership qualities for its worship services. Email resumé to blackjackbaptist_franklin@yahoo.com or mail resumés to Blackjack Baptist Church, P.O. Box 555, Franklin, KY 42135.

SEEKING: The congregation of Cross Keys Church is prayerfully looking for a bivocational senior pastor. Cross Keys is poised to follow a godly and dynamic shepherd who understands and upholds 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and are accepting resumés through Dec. 1. Respond online at: pastorsearch@crosskeysbaptistchurch.org or send hard copies to it at 14255 New Halls Ferry Rd., Florissant, MO 63033.

SEEKING: Full-time worship pastor who is responsible for planning, conducting, and promotion of the music and worship programs for Burlington Baptist Church, Burlington, Ky. Requirements include: A clear testimony of faith in Jesus Christ and a vital, growing relationship with Him. A sense of appreciation for Southern Baptist practices and doctrine. An unbridled passion to allow God's people to experience Him in worship. A strong moral character, healthy self-esteem, and a reputation of financial responsibility. Five or more years of experience as a worship pastor in a mid to large sized congregation (strongly preferred). Proficiency on either the guitar or piano. Prior ordination as a pastor. A degree in music, worship, or a related field. A seminary degree is strongly preferred. Duties will include leading all music programs, organizing worship services and other general staff and ministerial duties as required. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Send resumé to bbcworshipsearch@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Ovesen Heights Baptist Church in Hodgenville, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Interested individuals can send their resumé to jmd42748@yahoo.com or call (270) 358-8041 for more information.

SEEKING: Full/bivocational pastor for Jeffersonville Church, Jeffersonville, Ky. Seeking resumés for God led, relationship with God. Applicant(s) should have experience and education in God's ministry, King James Bible, a passion for growth, in both young and old. Send resumés, CD/DVD, to Jeffersonville Baptist Church, 145 KY HWY 599, Jeffersonville, KY 40337 or email to: royvtrimble@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky., is seeking male and female dormitory house parents. If interested, please send your resumé to Larry Gritton at president@oneidaschool.org.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, Carrollton, Ky., is seeking a part-time music minister. Send resumé to fbc.carrolltonky@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Providence Church is seeking a part time youth minister. Contact search-committeepbc@gmail.com.

AVAILABLE: Business for Sale: Looking for a mission? Christian publisher net \$57K part-time. Clients established. EZ to learn. Do from your location. \$24,900. Retiring. Call (828) 633-6382.

AVAILABLE: Deer Park Church is in possession of many wooden chairs. We would like to offer them free to interested and able to pick them up. (502)451-7220.

AVAILABLE: Windstream Business Solutions: Email William.Suratt@Windstream.com or call 859-357-6081 for all your church or business phone/internet/cloud needs.

FOR SALE: Baldwin spinet console piano for sale. Excellent condition. Recently tuned. \$700.00. Phone Donna at (502) 396-8397.

Behind the scenes of The Insanity of God

By Eliza Thomas

When Nik and Ruth Ripken moved from Kentucky with their three sons to Africa, they had no idea how much obedience to Christ would cost.

The assassination of four Somali Christian friends and the death of their son Timothy rocked the foundations of their faith. Their spiritual crisis launched a search for answers. They needed to know: is Jesus worth it? Is love more powerful than hate? Can faith in Jesus survive—let alone thrive—in hostile places?

For 15 years Nik and Ruth crisscrossed the globe to interview more than 700 persecuted Christians in over 72 countries.

The Insanity of God is their story. Dramatized reenactments bring to life some of the testimonies they heard from persecuted Christians in Russia, East Asia, and the Middle East.

I talked with producer Craig Martin about adapting the riveting story for the screen.

Eliza: Can you tell me about discovering the Ripkens' story?

Craig: Years ago I heard Nik speak and I remember thinking, "This guy's experience is amazing." He's so powerful as a speaker. While Nik was writing the book, we were talking about how to get churches interested in the story. I told him if he wanted to connect with younger people, then the book really needed to be made into a movie.

Eliza: Is that the only reason you felt the book needed to be made into a movie?

Craig: A book is a very personal event, but a film can be a social event. That's important because when you're viewing something with a group of people, everybody is going to take away something different. Then they'll talk about what they saw. Film is a discussion starter. It makes the stories more accessible to more people.

Eliza: How were Nik and Ruth involved in the production of the film?

Craig: They let us run with it, but a couple of scenes required them to be present. When we filmed in Africa, they went with us. We wanted them to go to the gravesite where their son, Timothy, is buried. In those locations they gave a lot of input about the story.

They were only on set for one reenactment. When we shot the story of Dmitri, the Russian pastor imprisoned and tortured for his faith, they were with us. We filmed that scene at the West Virginia State Penitentiary with actors from Pittsburg, many from Russian descent. The prison is historic; it was built before the Civil War.

Eliza: You filmed in an actual penitentiary? That location looks rough. I thought it had to be a set.

Craig: Yeah, I can't believe prisoners actually lived in those conditions. The metal frame beds were cemented



into the concrete right beside the shared toilet. The cells were so small that when you stand up, you can reach out and touch both walls. Ultimately, the West Virginia Supreme Court ruled that those cells constituted cruel and unusual punishment.

Eliza: How did you decide which scenes from the book needed to be dramatized?

Craig: When I was reading the book, I visualized the scenes I thought were the most important to see. Some we just couldn't include. One story we filmed, but had to cut was the scene where Nik's Somali coworker, Omar Aziz, walks all the way from Mogadishu to attend Timothy's funeral. When he arrives at the door, he says, "I've come to bury our son." I loved that scene, but it didn't work in the film.

Eliza: Was Timothy's death the most emotional moment in the film for you?

Craig: Definitely. Tim's death scene is always hard to watch because I've become so attached to Nik and Ruth. Once I even introduced Ruth as my second mom. Watching their son's death is always emotional for me.

Eliza: For me one of the most emotional moments was at the very end when the simple line, "In Memory of Timothy Ripken," emerges from a black screen after we hear Dmitri singing his own heart song.

Craig: Dmitri's song is authentic. We wanted to use it, but Nik couldn't find it among all the hundreds of interview tapes. I started wondering if it would turn up, but eventually he found it. When you hear it at the end, it's the actual recording.

Eliza: Nik describes how heart songs fuel faith in the lives of those enduring persecution. Is that one of the reasons the score was important for you?

Craig: I think music lives on beyond books and film. When I first heard Nik's story, I thought that it needed to be a book, a film, and a music project. I grew up in

Asia as a missionary kid, and music did a lot to inspire me everyday. I wanted the music for the film to be original and inspired by stories of faith in persecution.

Todd Smith of (the music group) Selah produced the music with Ed Cash and released an album.

When I initially talked to Todd about the project, I told him Dmitri's story. That's how he got hooked. Todd wrote the Russian song sung by the prisoners in the penitentiary, but it's based on Dmitri's heart song. Todd did all the research. He found the original song, and he worked from it to write the piece of music performed for the film by a Russian choir.

Eliza: Nik's story spans decades and continents. From the standpoint of creative direction, it must have been difficult to integrate the documentary elements of the film with the reenactments. Seeing Nik's audio tapes of his interviews helped unify the film. For me, they also were a visual cue that these stories are authentic and have been documented.

Craig: Greg Smith and Andy Duensing came up with the brilliant idea of filming the tapes. Those tapes became a way to marking the chapters of the story, and to represent each region and person's story. In the end when we see all the tapes, it's a powerful testimony.

In terms of authenticity, I've heard Nik tell some of these stories at least 15 times. They've become a part of the fabric of who he is now. They made such an impression that they're just seared into him.

Eliza: What has the reaction to the film been so far?

Craig: Often at a screening, it's emotional. Sometimes you hear people weeping.

When we showed it at the National Religious Broadcasters in Nashville, people were stunned. One person said, "I've got to tell you that your film is not entertaining. It's not entertaining, but it is convicting and inspiring." (BP)

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