



NAMB President Kevin Ezell speaks to trustees Feb. 8 in Miami. Photo by John Swain.

## Send NA 'strategic,' says Ezell

MIAMI (BP) – Send North America is the strategic plan to reverse the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) trend of losing ground in the planting of new congregations, North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Kevin Ezell told trustees at their Feb. 8 meeting in Miami.

Ezell revisited the SBC's church planting history in his remarks to the

board's trustees. Born in 1845, the SBC had planted one new church for every 3,800 people by 1900; using a football field metaphor, Ezell said that was like moving the ball out to the 50-yard line.

"In 2010, we had only one church for every 6,100 people, a 59 percent decrease, which meant we

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Seek to 'maximize cooperation'

## State Baptist execs to study NAMB relations

Tim Yarbrough

Arkansas Baptist News

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. – State convention executive directors have appointed a special committee of their peers to evaluate relations with the North America Mission Board (NAMB).

The action came during the annual Fellowship of State Executive Directors meeting held Feb. 13-16 in Scottsdale, Ariz. State executive directors meet each year for fellowship and to discuss issues related to Baptist state convention work.

The name of the group is "A Study Committee on Implementation of NAMB Initiatives with State Conventions."

Emil Turner, executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and president of the fellowship for 2011-12, said the committee was established "to evaluate how state conventions and NAMB can maxi-

mize cooperation during the transition process of implementing the new NAMB initiatives."

Announced in 2011, NAMB's Send North America strategy focuses heavily on church planting and shifting funds to the field for church planting.

Members of the committee are David Hankins, chairman, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention; Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma; Cecil Seagle, executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana; Mark Edlund, executive director of the Colorado Baptist Convention; Bob Mills, executive director of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists; and Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions.

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## Kids Clubs impact Haitian children

LEOGANE, HAITI – When Bob Fielding, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions ministries team member and Haiti project coordinator, preached Feb. 5, he didn't expect to hear the sermon discussed during a radio news broadcast – much less during a Haitian radio news broadcast. But that is exactly what happened.

It all took place when Fielding

and a team of three other Arkansas Baptists traveled to Haiti Feb. 3-6 to conduct training for Kids Club workers and to participate in a Kids Club dedication service.

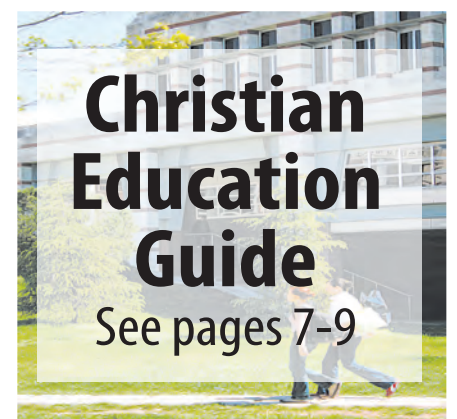
Fielding explained that the clubs are church-based programs designed to share with "children about Jesus, teach them the Word of God and reach the country for Christ."

"Currently, there are over 1,000

children registered in seven Kids Clubs," Fielding said. "Three more Kids Clubs are on track to be operating by May."

Fielding said the clubs got their start when two Arkansas Baptist churches – Faith Baptist Church, DeWitt, and Southside Baptist Church, Stuttgart – partnered to-

See **KIDS CLUBS** page 3



**Christian Education Guide**

See pages 7-9

## Victory reaches diverse Clarksville population

Lisa Watson

Arkansas Baptist News

CLARKSVILLE – It wasn't long ago that James Bell had no intention of starting a church in Clarksville. The longtime minister of music and his wife, Bertha, had something else in mind – they were going to take a little break from their ministry at Evangelistic Baptist Church, North Little Rock, and go on vacation.

But God had other plans.

Instead of the vacation they had planned, Bell fell sick, so sick he could only crawl from the bed to



Bell gave him a vision to plant a church in Clarksville.

It was not what they wanted to do. They were planning to find a

the bathroom and back – on his stomach.

After 10 days of illness, when he'd stopped taking his medicine, he said something miraculous happened – God

church home in Conway, where they live, so they wouldn't have such a long commute.

"God said, 'Not so,'" said Bell. "When God put that (vision) in my heart, I knew it wasn't me. I always told my pastor, 'You never have to worry about your job. I don't envy you.'"

Bell said he has had to "eat those words."

Bell planted Victory Ministries in Clarksville. The new church start, which is a mission of First Baptist Church, Clarksville, began meeting in March 2011. From the first meeting, with just seven

core group members, the church has grown to about 180 regular attenders in less than a year.

Victory Ministries also topped the list of 2011 baptism statistics for churches planted after 2009 with 49 baptisms.

From the beginning, Bell said he knew something was different about Victory.

"The first Sunday, two people came running to the altar, screaming, crying and saying, 'What can I do to be saved,'" said Bell.

He noted experience was "over-

See **VICTORY** page 3

# Foundation approves \$60,000 to Israel

LITTLE ROCK – Grants totaling \$60,000 to fund nine evangelistic projects in Israel were approved Feb. 2 by the Arkansas Baptist Foundation Board of Trustees.

Funds are being made available to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board through the Ezra Amos Endowment Fund, said David Moore, Foundation president.

“The largest grants will support the Potter Wheel Camps (summer youth/children camps), the Tabernacle Project (a tourist attraction in South Israel where missionaries and volunteers share the gospel) and the New Testament Fund (for purchase

of Hebrew New Testaments for distribution in Israel),” explained Moore.

In other business, the Board of Trustees reviewed investment performance reports.

David Hardt of Fort Smith, investment committee chairman, reported benchmarks for common funds had been updated to actual Exchange Traded-Funds (ETF), which “mimic the current allocation mix.”

“This change will allow for a more relevant net-to-net performance comparison,” explained Moore.

Jeff Steed, Foundation vice president, presented economic informa-

tion from a national forum of major endowments he attended recently in Phoenix. The Foundation’s operations enjoyed its best year ever due to a large unexpected gift during the year.

Tom Staley, a local Little Rock attorney and budget committee chairman, reported that income exceeded expectations and expenses were less than budgeted, which allowed the Foundation to finish strongly in the black.

Tim Dockery, Foundation attorney, reported more than \$7 million in current and planned charitable gift transactions through the Foun-

dation in 2011.

Moore shared a study recently conducted of planned giving companies. The ultimate goal, he said, is to provide a broader way to help churches and ministries with their planned giving efforts.

During 2011, distributions of more than \$15.6 million were made, including \$10.2 million to Arkansas Baptist ministries.

The Foundation sent nearly \$500,000 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and finished last year with approximately \$179 million in assets under management.

## STUDY

*continued from page one*

NAMB has come under fire in recent months by some state convention leaders for actions taken related to “cooperative agreements.” The Southern Baptist entity uses cooperative agreements with states to support and define its work and to assist in the furtherance of domestic mission work.

Turner said the study committee is important to evaluating and understanding the future work of state conventions with NAMB.

“I think this study committee can help get beyond anecdotal reports about difficulties that new work conventions face and arrive at quantifiable conclusions,” said Turner. “The desire is to cooperate with NAMB in a way that helps strengthen new work conventions.”

Turner added, “Executive directors in all the state conventions have appreciated the spirit evidenced by Dr. (Kevin) Ezell (president of NAMB) as he has worked with us. This should be a positive and productive process that strengthens our work together.”

Following the establishment of the committee, Turner said he contacted Ezell to reassure him the action “is not to be or do anything adversarial, but to seek understanding

*Kansas-Nebraska exec says*

## NAMB changes present challenges

REPORTS FROM a number of state conventions related to changes in NAMB funding have surfaced the past several months and some are now public.

In a recent column in *Baptist Digest*, the official publication of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists (KNCSB), Executive Director Bob Mills recounted a number of what he called “significant consequences” affecting work in the states.

“Change is ever-present in our relationship with the North American Mission Board,” Mills wrote.

He continued, “First, NAMB is not going to provide insurance for those missionaries who receive

less than 50 percent of their salary from NAMB. KNCSB or local associations will need to find ways to secure insurance for those missionaries. NAMB will provide decreasing monetary assistance over a five-year period.

“Secondly, our current funding formula with NAMB is going to change significantly. Now NAMB pays 80 percent of our shared budget, and KNCSB pays 20 percent.

Those items include missionary salaries, conferencing, travel, etc. We are being told the percentage will begin changing in 2013. Ultimately (2018 is the current plan), NAMB will pay 65 percent, and KNCSB will pay 35 percent.”



Mills

and cooperation.”

It is the desire of the state executive directors’ group that NAMB trustees be involved in discussions as well, he said.

“The focus of our concern is the cooperation of NAMB and state conventions,” Turner told Ezell. “I believe this will be a good thing and

expect it to proceed in a friendly and collaborative manner. Thank you for your hard work for the SBC and for the kingdom.”

Mike Ebert, NAMB’s vice president of communications, said it is NAMB’s “desire to be good partners with our state conventions,” adding, “(We) are always open to anything

Mills added, “These two changes will cost our convention and local associations significant dollars. Pray for wisdom in how we relate to NAMB during this transition.”

The changes at NAMB will force the Kansas-Nebraska convention “to rethink how we relate to NAMB in the future,” Mills said.

“Although church planting is a major concern for us, we must also care for our churches and their needs,” he said. “We must be concerned about church health and church revitalization, associational missions, disaster relief ministries, leadership development, campus ministry, discipleship and disciple making, youth and children’s evangelism, mobilization of volunteers, partnership missions, etc.”

that would move us toward penetrating lostness in North America. We are ultimately accountable to the Southern Baptist Convention through the NAMB trustees, and we are confident in the direction in which we are moving.”

Contact Tim Yarbrough at [tim@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:tim@arkansasbaptist.org).

## NAMB

*continued from page one*

were back at the 20-yard line,” Ezell said.

“That’s why we announced Send North America as our national church planting strategy,” Ezell said. “We want to increase our net gain of congregations by 5,000 in the next 10 years, from 51,000 to 56,000. To do that, we need to plant 15,000 churches in the next decade because we lose 890 existing churches each year. In other words, we have to plant about 900 churches a year just to break even.”

To reach its goal, Ezell said NAMB now is deploying church planting catalyst missionaries much more strategically than in the past,

with the goal of having one catalyst for every million people in population.

“That’s why we are doing some cutting in some places and redeploying in others because, traditionally, the deployment of our church planters has been disproportional,” Ezell said. “For instance, in one area, we have 23 church planting catalysts, but there are only 5 million people in the two-state region. There should be only six catalysts there.

“In the New York area, with 19 million people, we have only 11 church planting catalysts,” Ezell continued. “So we have twice as many catalysts in an area of 5 million people as in the entire New York area. In Canada, with 35 million people, we have only six catalysts.”

Trustees received an update from

NAMB’S vice president and chief financial officer, Carlos Ferrer, that the 2011 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions was \$56,040,868, exceeding the 2010 offering total by 3 percent.

Larry Wynn, vice president of evangelism, introduced the Find It Here New Testament distribution project scheduled for 2013. NAMB trustees approved the project, setting aside \$2.5 million for the New Testaments, a case of which will be distributed to every SBC church in North America. The initiative is part of NAMB’s 10-year God’s Plan for Sharing evangelistic effort.

Trustees also approved \$800,000 for the eventual purchase of property in Miami for a church planting and ministry center that will house a new church plant while providing minis-

try space for activities like “English as a Second Language” classes, after-school programs for kids and sports clinics.

Ezell said NAMB also is renewing its focus on bi-vocational pastors, pastors who hold full-time jobs while also serving as full-time pastors of Southern Baptist churches.

“The true iron men of the SBC are our bi-vocational pastors,” Ezell told the NAMB trustees, adding that in some states – like Alabama and Arkansas – bi-vocational pastors make up half of the Southern Baptist pastors.

“These iron men have been overlooked and underappreciated for years in the SBC,” Ezell said. “Starting at the convention’s annual meeting this summer, ... we’re going to recognize them and honor them.”

## KIDS CLUBS

*continued from page one*

gether for a mission trip to Haiti in April 2011. Part of their trip included ministering to children by distributing school supplies and children's clothing. While in Haiti, more than 140 people became Christians.

A Haitian church planter saw their work with children, "and the Holy Spirit gave him the idea of starting a kids club," Fielding said.

The club was meeting under a blue tarp held up by poles about a month later on the day Roody Joseph saw them. Joseph, the ABSC's partner in Haiti, was on his way to a construction site with a team from Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock, but he pulled over to see what was going on under the tarp. He found 80 children singing together, and the Haitian church planter shared how he had been inspired by the Stuttgart/DeWitt team's ministry to children.

Joseph wasted no time in contacting Fielding.

"Joseph was convinced that God was answering prayer, giving the Haitian church a new tool to reach children and families," Fielding said.

The ministry grew from one club to the current seven clubs. Eventually, the ABSC began sending money to help feed the children at the clubs.

It soon became apparent the clubs needed more than food. They needed a curriculum.

Jennifer Hostetler, preschool director at Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro, and Allison Kiziah, ABSC evangelism and church growth team member and children's consultant, along with several Arkansas children's specialists, wrote a 52-week curriculum for the clubs, which was translated into Creole.

Hostetler, Fielding and Tom and



Bob Fielding of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention preaches during a trip to Haiti Feb. 5.

Shannon Ezell of Compass Church, Batesville, took the curriculum to Haiti during their February trip.

Along with delivering the curriculum, the team conducted training for more than 30 Kids Club workers. The team shared what the Bible teaches about children's ministry, explained how to use the curriculum they had written and answered questions on a variety of subjects. Shannon Ezell, a special education teacher and speech therapist, even shared about including children with special needs in the clubs.

The team took part in the Kids Club dedication service Feb. 5. During the service, Fielding preached from Deuteronomy 6.

"I told the parents that the Kids Clubs were not sent by God to Haiti as a substitute for God's call on their lives to raise their children in the Lord," said Fielding.

Addressing 500-plus parents, he focused on Deuteronomy 6:9, which says, "Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

Fielding explained, "I particularly made application on verse 9 telling

them that the Word of God is to be the standard for what they allow into their homes because what they allow into their homes impacts their children, whether it is Voodoo or TV and music that does not honor the Lord. It is God's command here that parents teach their children to love God and His Word, and they will be accountable to God for doing that."

The morning after the dedication, a news reporter from the local Haitian radio station called Joseph, telling him to listen to the radio. During the news broadcast, the reporter had summarized Fielding's message from Deuteronomy 6 and had challenged parents to enroll their children in Kids Clubs.

"I believe God is sending revival to Haiti, and this chapter in the history of the work demonstrates again how our method of church cooperation in furthering God's mission is making a huge difference in people's lives," Fielding said.

"Arkansas Baptists are being used of the Lord in a mighty way in Haiti."

Most importantly, Bell said he just wants to seek the Lord for leadership with the church.

"We just want to be about our Father's business," he explained. "I asked God when He sent me on this mission to just keep me humble. ... 'I just want to do Your work and go on,'" he said.

Until recently, Victory Ministries didn't advertise at all. Instead, it relied upon word-of-mouth to tell others about the church start.

"People are coming to see if (the church) is for real," Bell said.

For Bell's wife, Bertha, who is from Clarksville, his calling to plant a church was not what she was expecting either.

"We were in our comfort zone," she said, noting when Bell began telling her of his calling, she didn't really want to leave Evangelistic Baptist Church. "I even asked him, ... 'Are you sure God was talking to you?'"

But she said she knew something like this had to come from the Lord, not from her husband.

Many of Bertha Bell's family members, including her older brother, regularly attend services. She said her older brother was even healed of cancer through the prayer ministry of the church.

"God is just blessing us," she said.

Bell said God has used his ministry at Victory to give him "on-the-job training" on what it means to develop a passion to plant a church.

And he said he is very grateful for the help he's received from First Baptist Church, Clarksville, Victory Ministries' sponsoring church; the Arkansas River Valley Association; and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Bell said two men who serve with him on the Victory Ministries staff: JaCorey Brockman, youth pastor, and Patrick Baker, associate pastor, stand ready to assist him with rigors of the new ministry.

"These men are minutemen," he said. "I can call on them anytime."

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## ABN Digest

Stories of interest to Arkansas Baptists

### Phil Roberts resigns Midwestern Seminary

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (BP) – Trustees of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Feb. 10 accepted the resignation of seminary president R. Philip Roberts during a called meeting and named as acting president Robin Hadaway, associate professor of missions at the seminary. Roberts resignation is effective Feb. 29.



Roberts

A press release about the resignation explained that a meeting to consider the performance of the president was "suspended" and that before that meeting Roberts had tendered his resignation.

Roberts was elected as Midwestern's fourth president in January 2001. Among facility projects during his time there were construction of housing facilities and renovation of many of Midwestern's existing buildings. The seminary is currently building a 1,000-seat chapel complex.

### Pastor suspects agenda in New York church ban

NEW YORK (BP) – New York's ban on churches meeting in public schools, which went into effect Feb. 12, is about "far more than meeting space," said Ray Parascando, pastor of Crossroads Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Staten Island, N.Y. Parascando believes broader religious freedom is at stake. "More and more, this just smells like there's an agenda."

### Georgia editor writes 'The Calvinists are here'

DULUTH, Ga. (BP) – Southern Baptists must decide whether they are satisfied with a "presumable encroachment of Calvinism" in their leadership and their seminary graduates, Baptist paper Editor Gerald Harris wrote Feb. 9, drawing responses from several SBC entities. In a column titled, "The Calvinists are here," Harris, editor of *The Christian Index* of the Georgia Baptist Convention, set forth statements about Calvinism and quoted Southern Baptists on both sides of the issue.

For more ABN Digest, go to [www.arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest)

## VICTORY

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whelming" and life-changing.

From that first service, Bell asked the Lord to give him wisdom, guidance and direction to lead the people who come to Victory.

"He does that every week," said Bell.

When Bell, who is African-American, first looked at the option of planting a church in Clarksville, he was told there wasn't a large enough African-American population in the area to support another church.

And yet, the ministry has continued to grow. The church reaches out to a multiethnic community, including Hispanics, African-Americans and others.

Bell believes the difference comes from the miracles he's witnessed through the Holy Spirit.

"People have been healed of cancer who have lived in this neighborhood all their lives," he explained.

## Occupy the prayer closet

Our world is in trouble. It seems every day I read of a new quack with a new cause who gets the attention of the media.

Just like many of you reading this column, I chuckled more than once when I read of the "Occupy Wall Street" and other "occupy" protestors who emerged on the scene starting last year.

What was funny to me as a Christian journalist was the way the secular media attempted to report on their escapades and give them a voice.

The problem, of course, for many of the protestors was they couldn't quite agree on what they were protesting.

Some would say they were protesting the greed of Wall Street. Others would say they were protesting how the government catered to the rich. Then, there would be the occasional, "I protest the eating of red meat," or, "I am protesting the use of gasoline-powered cars."

It wasn't long before the secular news media grew tired of their lack of focus. Before long, even big city liberal mayors who had allowed the protests to disrupt the lives of their citizens grew weary and asked for their camps to be moved to more manageable locations.

I am sympathetic with folks who

have a cause, particularly when they are passionate about it – and especially when it focuses on helping the downtrodden of our society.

For today's Christian, however, the stakes are much higher.

As we consider the world we live in, we should be looking to turn our hearts toward God and petition Him to heal our troubled land and

for people to turn their hearts toward God.

It's time we occupy the prayer closet.

Like a number of other Arkansas Baptists, I was

### PRESSING ON

Tim Yarbrough



blessed to hear Michael Catt, pastor of Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga., speak recently on the importance and power of prayer at the 2012 State Conference on Evangelism and Church Growth.

To paraphrase Catt's message shared with attendees at the prayer workshop, commit all you do to the Lord, and He will bless you.

It's really as simple as that, but the question is, Are we faithfully following God's instruction on prayer?

For me, I'll admit that I'm hit-and-miss in my own prayer life. I do a decent job of reading my Bible every day and praying through my prayer list.

But since Catt's timely message,



I have made an effort to step up my daily prayer commitment, and I encourage you to do the same.

It's only through our persistent and proactive prayer and our occupation of our prayer closet that we can defeat the devil as he attempts to destroy our lives, our families, our ministries and literally our souls.

We have a purpose and the cause

of Jesus Christ to give us clarity to counteract the schemes of the evil one.

"Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8, NASB).

Tim Yarbrough is editor of the Arkansas Baptist News. Email him at [tim@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:tim@arkansasbaptist.org).

## 'You just can't grow a church these days'

Over the past four years, serving hundreds of churches in 38 states, I wish I had a quiet moment for every time a pastor has said to me, "You just can't grow a church here."

The truth of the matter is that none of us can "grow a church" anywhere. The church is the Bride of Christ – a living spiritual organism – the likes of which only God can grow. But God chooses to work through His people to expand His kingdom, and He is pleased to utilize humanity to accomplish His mission. The trouble is that too

many churches are seeking "church growth" rather than "planting the gospel." When we truly are about the business of planting the gospel, the church will grow.

Jesus met people at their points

of need. Likewise, a church must meet a community at its point of need. But a church must first understand its community's needs – whether social, physical, municipal

or educational – and then genuinely and lovingly seek to meet those needs.

I was recently in First Baptist Church, Bay, with Pastor Danny

Taylor. Bay is a small town just south of Jonesboro and seems to be growing smaller by the day. The economy is far from thriving, and a large portion of the population receives government subsidy. However, in just four years, this church has grown from an attendance of 40 to an attendance exceeding 220!

What's their secret? There is no aggressive marketing plan; they are just creating opportunities to meet needs and share the gospel. Many people in Bay do not have extra income to spend on family entertainment. So, the church is creating a regular series of family-oriented events, such as block parties, cookouts, holiday events and even

free pizza deliveries in mobile home parks. They are building relationships, gathering contact information and following up with each family to meet further needs and share the gospel.

"I tell my people that if they do not genuinely care about the people on the other side of that front door, I don't want them participating in the follow-up," said Taylor. "We aren't doing 'church sales,' we're loving people like Jesus loves them." Taylor reports that about 60 percent of the new growth is new believers.

Eric W. Ramsey is an international evangelist and cross-cultural communication strategist serving as president of Tom Cox World Ministries in Mountainburg.

### ANSWERING THE CALL

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Tom Cox World Ministries



Volume 111, Number 4 USPS08021  
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The Arkansas Baptist News (ISSN 1040-6056) is published bi-weekly by the Arkansas Baptist News-magazine, Inc., 10 Remington Drive, Little Rock, AR 72204. Subscription rates are \$7.75 per year (Every

Resident Family Plan), \$8.75 per year (Group Plan), \$11 per year (Individual). Arkansas Baptist News, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203; phone 501-376-4791; toll-free 800-838-2272; email: [abn@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:abn@arkansasbaptist.org).

Periodical Postage paid at Little Rock, AR. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arkansas Baptist News, P.O. Box 552, Little Rock, AR 72203.

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## Baptists Ask

### What is "soul winning?"

The phrase "soul winning" originates from the King James translation of Proverbs 11:30b, which says, "And he that winneth souls is wise."

Baptist preacher C. H. Spurgeon popularized the term with his lecture series "The Soul-Winner." In it, Spurgeon taught Christians how to share the gospel with others. He believed soul winning was the chief business of the Christian minister and the main pursuit of every believer. To Spurgeon, soul winning was simply "instructing a man that he may know the truth of God." He taught that believers must share Christ in a plain, non-emotional format.

The phrase "soul winning" became embedded into 20th century American revivalism and evangelism. Texts such as L. R. Scarborough's "With Christ after the Lost," C. E. Autrey's "Basic Evangelism" and Robert Coleman's "Master Plan of Evangelism" all use the term, assuming their readers know where it originated.

Today Christians use the term "soul winning" less frequently. Because the term reminds many Christians of tent revivals and "sales-pitch" evangelism techniques, few contemporary evangelism books use it. Also, Proverbs 11:30b is not an easy verse to translate. Because it literally says, "The one who takes lives is wise," some versions (KJV, NIV) interpret the verse positively, but at least two (RSV, HCSB) interpret it negatively.

Christians may not use the term "soul winning" any longer, but they should still believe that gospel sharing is important. The Old Testament prophets shared God's truth with sinful Israel. Jesus preached with authority to the crowds, and Andrew brought his brother, Peter, to hear Jesus' message. Jesus told His disciples that they would become fishers of men (Matt. 4:19). Even Christians are to help one another out of sin (James 5:19-20).

Simply put, soul winning is witnessing, which is "sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God" (George Worrell). Christians are God's witnesses regardless of terminology.

Ken Gore is chair of the Williams Baptist College department of Christian ministries.



Gore

## 'There's an app for that!'

There's an app for that" has become an iconic phrase. Apps help make everything convenient by turning your phone or tablet into an amazing life tool. You can get an app for your bank account, finding movie times, directions to anywhere and following all the late-breaking news. I even have an app that turns my phone into reading glasses! There are more than 500,000 apps for Apple users and more than 380,000 apps for Android users. There are apps for everything. Apps have become indispensable little tools that impact our lives.

However, the most important, life-altering app is the Bible. God has given us a useful tool that touches every aspect of our lives. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul tells Timothy the Bible "thor-

oughly equips" us "for every good work." Paul also tells Timothy that Scripture is profitable for instructing us in every area of life. In other words, being equipped to use your Bible means you are equipped for life.

Most Christians would readily offer an "amen" to this simple connection of Scripture to life application. Unfortunately, most Christians do not go beyond saying "amen." Every study conducted over the last 20 years shows that we are long on amens but short on action when it comes to using our Bibles on a daily basis.

Spurgeon reportedly said, "It is easier to find 10 men who will die for the Bible than one who will read it."

Greg Addison is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and pastor at First Baptist Church, Cabot.



### PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Greg Addison

## Proposed casino gambling amendment

Several months ago a Texas businessman filed with the attorney general and the secretary of state a proposed amendment to the Arkansas Constitution that, if eventually approved by Arkansas voters, would give him an exclusive right to own and operate casinos in seven of the state's counties. In addition to granting a monopoly on casino gambling, the amendment would allow the state no regulatory authority over the casino gambling operations. The amendment was certified, giving way to the next requirement, which entails the gathering of some 80,000 signatures of Arkansas' registered voters on petitions.

Before anyone should experience great angst over this, let me remind everyone that this is the fourth time this same individual has filed this amendment. He tried this in 2006, 2009 and 2010 – and now here he is again. In those previous attempts, nothing was ever done after certification of the proposed amendment. The Texan said in 2006 that he gathered thousands of Arkansas voters' signatures on petitions, but when we challenged him to produce them, he declined. We are confident that he gathered no signatures.

I checked the secretary of state's website. Groups or individuals sponsoring or opposing initiatives to pass constitutional amendments must file a Statement of Organization and follow that with monthly financial reports once \$500 has been raised or spent for those purposes. Nothing has been filed for this latest power grab. It is apparent at this point that nothing has been done and is not likely to be done – although that could change. Therefore, we will continue to monitor the matter.

If and when we see that this initiative is different from the previous three attempts, we will promptly put out the alert. We will organize and mobilize the

same grassroots network that we have used to defeat similar initiatives over the last three decades. For the time being, we should simply stand by, be vigilant and stay tuned. We won't let this matter "fly under the radar" if it becomes a real deal.

### Legislative session underway

The current session of the Arkansas General Assembly began Feb. 13. This fiscal session by law cannot last more than 45 days. Unlike a regular session of the legislature that meets every odd-numbered year, this fiscal session is not intended to deal with any substantive measures.

The agenda for fiscal sessions is to project state revenue and to establish a state budget and make appropriations for the next fiscal year based on the projections of revenue. Bills dealing with substantive matters can be filed and considered, but it takes a vote of two-thirds of each chamber of the legislature to do so.

We don't anticipate that any substantive measures will be taken up. So while the likelihood isn't particularly high of seeing initiatives filed dealing with alcohol and other drugs, gambling, pornography, the homosexual agenda, religious liberty, medical marijuana, race relations and other issues on our agenda, it is, nevertheless, still possible for that to happen.

Given that there is both opportunity and possibility that one or more substantive measures that concern us may be filed and considered, we will closely monitor the session and its developments. Should there be initiatives filed that are important to us, we will get the word out, explain the issue(s), suggest action steps and provide contact information for getting messages to legislators.

Larry Page is executive director of the Arkansas Faith & Ethics Council.

### FAITH & ETHICS

Larry Page  
Arkansas Faith & Ethics  
Council

### Blessed to read the ABN!

I would like to continue to receive the *Arkansas Baptist News*, and would also like to have it sent to someone else, too.

We moved here from Alabama, and most all churches there provided *The Alabama Baptist* for all church members. I am saddened that some churches in this area do not seem to. And some of the churches are rather large churches. I am blessed to still receive *The Alabama Baptist*

from First Baptist Church, Selma, Ala., where I served for several years on staff and grew up in that wonderful church. I have certainly been blessed by subscribing to the

*Arkansas Baptist News* since moving here a few years ago. My husband and I are almost homebound, so we do treasure this

way of "keeping up" with Southern Baptists!

Thank you again for your fine paper!

Norma Pee  
Russellville

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Book reviews welcome

The *Arkansas Baptist News* invites pastors, other church staff and members of Arkansas Baptist churches to submit reviews of religion-related books they have read.

Preferably, the book review should be no more than 350 words and should be about a book released in the past six months.

Reviews submitted for publication may be edited for content and style.

If interested, please contact Tim Yarbrough, editor, at tim@arkansasbaptist.org, or call 800-838-2272 (toll-free in state) or 501-376-4791, ext. 5151.

Monticello pastor sees blessings in illness

## Church celebrates 'banner year for God'

Jessica Vanderpool  
Arkansas Baptist News

MONTICELLO – Pastor Larry Wilkerson has seen what God can do when one expects great things from Him.

In 2010, Wilkerson was diagnosed with a form of meningitis that sent him to the hospital for more than 50 days and left him with lifelong challenges – including dizzy spells and memory problems.

It left Immanuel Baptist Church (IBC), Monticello, without a pastor for a time. And though Wilkerson did return to the pastorate, the church saw only one baptism in all of 2010.

Wilkerson wanted 2011 to be different.

"I asked the Lord in January (2011), 'I want to do much better. I'm expecting great things from You, Lord,'" said Wilkerson, explaining he wasn't trying to "put God on the spot."

And 2011 was different. The church had 20 new additions – 10 by baptism and 10 by letter.

"You know, I'm thrilled to death," said Wilkerson. "I knew God was capable. And I was just hoping that God would put me in a place to enable me to do something like that, and He did."

Wilkerson said preaching the gospel is his calling.

"I try to share the gospel everywhere I go," he said. "God has just given me a wonderful place in my heart for the lost."

His gift of evangelism is not lost on David Mitchell, associational missionary for Bartholomew Baptist Association, of which the church is a part.

"He loves to preach and to share



Larry Wilkerson, former pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Monticello, saw God at work in the church in 2011. The congregation added 10 people by baptism and 10 by letter.

his testimony, but his best gift is that of an evangelist, winning people to the Lord," Mitchell said of Wilkerson. "Not everyone he won to Christ this past year while pastoring IBC was baptized into the membership of IBC. Ten were, but there were another 25 added to the kingdom through Bro. Larry's faithful witness."

The church "has kind of been in that frame of mind that we want 'to seek and (to) save that which is lost,'" he explained, quoting part of Luke 19:10.

The church's prayer room has played a big role as they do this, Wilkerson said, noting prayer warriors use it and people may pray for an hour at a time.

"And that has made the biggest difference in our church, and I think the Lord has truly blessed us because of that," he said.

He explained the church also reaches out to the community via a food pantry, and their services are broadcast on local TV, which draws people to the church.

"(God) has just so blessed us in such a great way (in 2011)," Wilkerson said. "It's been a great year for Him. Praise His name for it."

And that's what Wilkerson wanted – "a banner year" for God.

Due to health reasons, Wilkerson had been praying about retiring.

"And I said, 'Lord, let me leave with a banner year for You,'" he related. "And that's what I wanted to do, and praise God that He allowed me to do that."

Due to the meningitis, Wilkerson struggles to stand for the length of a sermon, and he has dizzy spells. The doctor told him he might have trouble with his memory. The doctor was right.

"I don't have the drive to do anything in this world but preach the gospel," explained Wilkerson. "And my memory – I can't remember people's names. Sometimes people ask me what church I preach at. I can't remember."

"But one thing that hasn't failed me is my memory of the Scripture. I asked the Lord many, many years

ago when I started preaching that I never wanted to use notes, and to this day, I still don't have to."

Though Wilkerson recently retired, he said he plans to eventually pursue evangelistic work, preaching at various churches.

Zan Pierce is serving as the new pastor at Immanuel Baptist. Pierce, who previously served as pastor at Cominto Baptist Church, Dermott, said he and Wilkerson have been friends for about 30 years. Pierce filled in at Immanuel Baptist on Sunday evenings during Wilkerson's illness.

"He and Immanuel (Baptist) have set an extremely high standard, but with the help and direction of Jesus Christ, we will continue to help grow God's kingdom," Pierce said. "Immanuel (Baptist) has a variety of outreach ministries ... we have committed to continue and increase wherever and whenever possible."

Despite the struggles that have resulted from his illness, Wilkerson is able to see how God used the situation.

"And thank goodness for the illness that I had," he said. "It really opened my eyes to a lot of things. And I think God used that illness to get me back into a place where I needed to be."

Regarding the number of baptisms the church saw in 2011, Wilkerson said, "And it just shows you what you can do if you expect more out of God. You know, I think that churches today don't expect a lot out of God and so in essence maybe they don't receive a lot from God. When you begin expecting from God, God just produces in a mighty, mighty way."

Contact Jessica Vanderpool at [jessica@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:jessica@arkansasbaptist.org).

Concert review:

## Steven Curtis Chapman rocks Central Ark.



Steven Curtis Chapman (center) performs with fellow artists Andrew Peterson (left) and Josh Wilson at a recent concert at First Baptist Church, Benton.

Karen Jordan  
Special to ABN

BENTON – Fifteen hundred Christian music fans gathered in Central Arkansas Feb. 3 at First Baptist Church, Benton, for Steven Curtis Chapman's Songs and Stories tour with special guests Andrew Peterson and Josh Wilson.

Show Hope, a nonprofit organization that mobilizes individuals and communities to meet the needs of orphans, is sponsor of the tour.

Clay Cunningham, minister to students at First Baptist, said, "The stories of God's faithfulness to the Chapman family were so encouraging."

Cunningham added, "It was also refreshing to see their response of obedience to the ministry of adoption that God has set their family on."

A preconcert event hosted by Chapman offered a close-up view of the artist. Chapman

responded to questions, noting that many of his songs were written during the dark times in his life.

"I never knew how hard the journey would be," he told fans. "The valleys are deeper and mountains steeper than I ever imagined."

During the concert, Chapman shared some new songs and revised versions of his hits from his newest album "re:creation." He brought his audience to tears with "Cinderella" and "Heaven is the Face," memorializing the tragic loss of his youngest daughter, Maria. He also shared a tender song that he wrote for their first grandchild, Eiley Eliza.

Andrew Peterson offered stories and songs about his faith and his family, including "Dancing in the Minefields" and "The Reckoning."

Josh Wilson shared an acoustic version of "Amazing Grace," using a special "loop pedal."

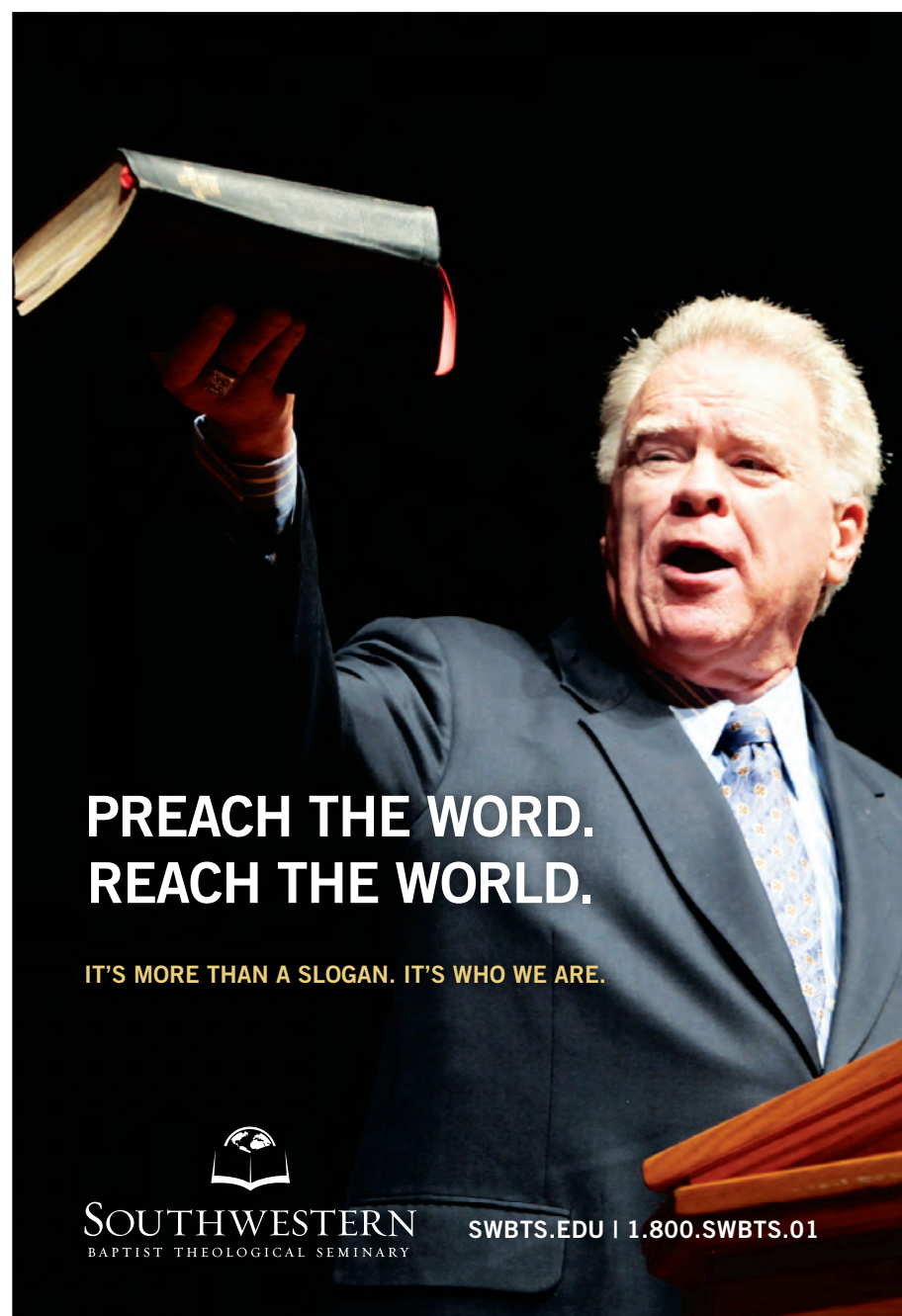
Karen Jordan is a freelance writer who lives in Hot Springs Village.

# Christian Education Guide

**T**he cost of a Christian education oftentimes causes “sticker shock” among families. But through some careful planning and access to readily-available financial aid, a Christian education is within reach of most students. Read more from Williams Baptist College’s Brett Cooper in this special section and learn how to take advantage of your financial aid options.

*See pages 8-9*





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Brett Cooper  
Williams Baptist College



WALNUT RIDGE - You could call it "sticker shock." Lots of students, and their parents, are very interested in a Christian college or university, but the costs they see on the front end can appear pretty daunting.

Don't despair, say financial aid professionals. Scholarships are available, and they can make Christian higher education very affordable.

The important thing is to look at the bottom-line cost after scholarships are figured in, rather than to be intimidated by a school's stated tuition, housing and college fee expenses.

"We encourage students and parents to let us put together their financial aid package before they

decide anything," said Barbara Turner, director of financial aid at Williams Baptist College.

Turner points out that timing is crucial when pursuing scholarships and encourages families to get an early start. Once a high school student's senior year begins, they need to be proactive in seeking financial aid for college.

"Many students miss scholarship opportunities because they miss deadlines or they wait to the last minute to apply for scholarships that may require reference letters or essays. There are a number of good online scholarship search engines that look for scholarships in Arkansas," she noted.

In particular, Turner recommended the websites [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and [www.fundmyfuture.info](http://www.fundmyfuture.info).

It is also important for families to file their taxes quickly so they can complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Turner said the FAFSA is a critical component in receiving financial aid.

"This tells us if they qualify for Pell Grants, work-study and loans. Work-study funds are limited so the students that apply early are evaluated first for these limited funds," she noted.

Above all, Turner reminds students and parents that Christian higher education is an investment in their future.

"If you build a strong foundation on a quality education, you will be able to build upon that foundation as you go into your career. I have never regretted the money I spent on my education."

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# LifeWay to continue to sell 2011 NIV Bible

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) – Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources recently voted to continue selling the new NIV Bible in LifeWay stores.

Meeting Feb. 13-14 at LifeWay offices in downtown Nashville, Tenn., trustees heard a report from a special task force appointed to follow up on a nonbinding resolution approved by the 2011 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) that requested LifeWay consider not selling the New International Version (NIV) 2011 Bible in their stores.

Committee Chairman Adam Greenway, a member of First Baptist Church in Mt. Washington, Ky., told the board “vast amounts of scholarly research and other relevant information was gathered and studied ... and a number of subject matter experts addressed the task force.”

Greenway said LifeWay received support for continuing to carry the 2011 NIV from R. Albert Mohler Jr. and Russell Moore of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Jimmy Draper, former president of LifeWay; George Guthrie, professor of Bible at Union University; and Douglas Moo, chairman of the Committee on Bible Translation, which translated the new NIV.

Greenway, who serves as senior associate dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism at Southern Seminary, also told trustees, “Messengers to the 2011 SBC annual meeting were encouraged to vote for the resolution based on incorrect information.”

As an example, Greenway said the 2011 NIV contains no gender-neutral wording for the names of God. The 2011 NIV, Greenway said, “follows translation methodologies that are embraced by the overwhelming majority of Bible translators in the world.”

“It is not that we are endorsing the 2011 NIV,” Greenway said. “We endorse what we publish, and the translation we publish is the Holman Christian Standard Bible. That is the translation that we endorse.”

Greenway told trustees, “We do not believe the 2011 NIV rises to the level to where it should be pulled or censored or not carried in our retail chain.”



Trustees of LifeWay Christian Resources vote to continue selling the new NIV Bible.

The task force and the trustee executive committee both unanimously approved the following recommendation: “It is recommended that trustees reaffirm the decision of LifeWay to continue to carry the 2011 NIV alongside other versions of the Holy Bible.”

After a few minutes of discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by trustees.

Greenway said many of the differences between the 2011 NIV and the 1984 NIV involved such changes as “brothers” to “brothers and sisters.” One example is Luke 17:3, which the 2011 NIV renders, “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.”

Greenway addressed 1 Timothy 2:12, which has been the most discussed passage among 2011 NIV critics.

The 2011 NIV renders it, “I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.”

The 1984 NIV translated it “have authority.” The verse, some said, takes sides in the debate over female pastors by allowing a female pastor to say, “I’m not assuming authority on my own initiative; it was given to me by the other pastors and elders.”

The committee examined the passage closely, Greenway said.

“The issue comes down to the Greek, and very conservative inerrantists, Greek scholars (on the Committee on Bible Translation), believe

of the past? Yes. But again, our issue should not be merely to maintain traditional translations; it should be to always more fully get to the accuracy and intention of what God originally inspired through those who penned the Scripture.”

Greenway added, “We are not giving a stamp of approval. ... We are simply saying from a retail perspective, we do not believe that we should cease carrying and make available to the public the 2011 NIV.”

Several “highly respected conservative” scholars have endorsed the 2011 NIV, Greenway said, and among them are Darrell Bock, William Mounce, Rod Decker, Daniel Wallace, Timothy George and Tremper Longman.

The MacArthur Study Bible – with notes by John MacArthur – also will be available in the 2011 NIV in 2013.

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## ATTENTION PASTORS

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## Blackaby conference dates set for March 5-6

JONESBORO – Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro, will host the Spiritual Leadership Conference, presented by Blackaby Ministries International, March 5-6.

The conference, led by Henry T. Blackaby, Richard Blackaby and others, will teach those attending how to answer God's call to lead, submit

to God's shaping of their lives, let God set their agendas, lead from the heart, build God-honoring organizations and more.

The conference will begin each day at 9 a.m., with registration starting at 8 a.m. March 5. To register, visit [www.walnutstreetbaptist.org](http://www.walnutstreetbaptist.org) or call 870-972-0220.

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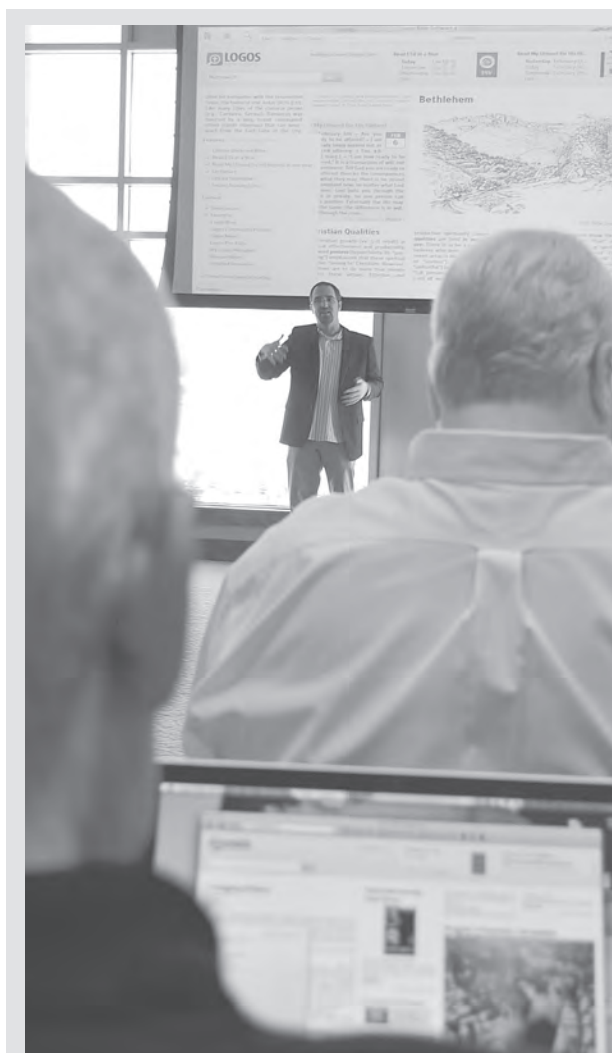
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### ABN Blind Tape Ministry

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### Logos software

Bobby Moss, national presenter with Logos Bible Software and professor at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, led a presentation about Logos Bible Software for more than 80 people gathered at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention building Feb. 6. Photo by Jessica Vanderpool

## Access the ABN on your mobile device

**On iPhone:** Type [www.arkansasbaptist.org](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org) in your Web browser. Click on "add to home screen."

**On Android:** On the desktop, press home screen until a context menu pops up. Select "shortcut" menu item. Select "bookmark" menu item. Bookmarks pop up. Select target bookmark Web page ([www.arkansasbaptist.org](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org)), and it will display on the home screen.



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# Classifieds

### PASTOR

Mt. Zion Baptist Church seeks **bi-vocational pastor**. MZBC, P.O. Box 258, Oxford, AR 72517 or [pastor@write.com](mailto:pastor@write.com).

Marshall Road Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Ark., is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to Marshall Road Baptist Church, P.O. Box 726, Jacksonville, AR 72078 or to email [mrbpcpastorsearchteam@gmail.com](mailto:mrbpcpastorsearchteam@gmail.com). Phone: 501-982-4564.

Hazen First Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Hazen FBC — Pastor Search Team, P.O. Box 489, Hazen, AR 72064, or email [hazenpastorsearch@hotmail.com](mailto:hazenpastorsearch@hotmail.com).

Lake Hamilton Baptist, Hot Springs, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Receiving resumes through 3-1-2012. Mail to LHBC, 5963 Central Ave., Hot Springs, AR 71913, or email to [stacinewell@gmail.com](mailto:stacinewell@gmail.com).

**Bi-vocational pastor** needed at Grace Country Church, Sidney, Ark. A small nontraditional church with a mission for local community outreach. Send resume to Pastor Search Team, P.O. Box 114, Sidney, AR 72577, or call 870-346-5822.

Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Arkadelphia, Ark., is seeking a **full-time pastor** to fulfill that office in a godly manner, upholding God's Word, as it is written, and can minister to the needs of the church. Contact Fred Goshen at [frednbea@suddenlink.net](mailto:frednbea@suddenlink.net).

First Baptist Church, El Dorado, Ark., is prayer-

fully seeking a **pastor** following the retirement of its pastor after 15 years of service. Please email resumes to [searchfbc11@yahoo.com](mailto:searchfbc11@yahoo.com) or mail to Pastor Search Committee, 100 East Peach Street, Room 350, El Dorado, AR 71730.

Gravel Hill Baptist Church of Benton, Ark., is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Gravel Hill is a multi-generational congregation located between Benton and Hot Springs. GHBC is located in a rural community with 60-80 attending worship each Sunday. Gravel Hill is ministry-oriented with music, missions, Awana and praise kids ministries. Mail resume and detailed doctrinal statement to Gravel Hill Baptist Church, 6259 Hwy. 9, Benton, AR 72019, or email to [gravelhillpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:gravelhillpastorsearch@gmail.com).

First Baptist Church Alton, Missouri, is seeking **full-time pastor**. Location in rural south Missouri county seat town. Send resume to First Baptist Church, Box 187, Alton, MO 65606, or [wjwynn44@yahoo.com](mailto:wjwynn44@yahoo.com).

### OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

East Side Baptist Church in Mountain Home, Ark., is seeking a **full-time minister of music**. Qualifications include the ability to primarily lead a blended worship service but will also include leading a traditional service and working with a choir. Prior experience is preferred. Please email your resume to [stephanie@esbcmh.com](mailto:stephanie@esbcmh.com) or mail to East Side Baptist

Church, 718 East 9th Street, Mountain Home, AR 72653.

FBC Muskogee is accepting resumes for the following full-time positions: **associate pastor, education minister** and **children's minister**. Send resumes and inquiries to [pastor@fbcuskogee.org](mailto:pastor@fbcuskogee.org) or Pastor Lance Sawyer, 111 S. 7th St., Muskogee, OK 74401; 918-682-3496.

Growing congregation seeking **worship leader**. Part-time now, hopefully full-time in near future. Walnut Valley Baptist Church, Hot Springs, Ark., 501-282-2887 or [tforsrest@cablelynx.com](mailto:tforsrest@cablelynx.com).

A man called to serve as **associational missionary** for the Caddo River Baptist Association. This association is made up of 20 mostly rural churches. Looking for a man with a heart for the kingdom of God. Send resumes to P.O. Box 788, Mount Ida, AR 71957, or email to [caddoriverbaptist@windstream.net](mailto:caddoriverbaptist@windstream.net).

Seeking a **part-time youth minister** and/or **children's minister**. Open Door Baptist Church Personnel Committee, 2400 W. Oak St., Rogers, AR 72756, or [kkroten@cox.net](mailto:kkroten@cox.net).

London's First Baptist Church is seeking a **part-time worship leader**. Ours is a "blended service" with Sunday morning attendance in the 130-150 range. Send resume to First Baptist Church, 17 Southern Baptist Road, London, AR 72847.

First Baptist Trumann, Ark., is seeking a **part-time youth minister**. Send resume to First Baptist

Church, P.O. Box 575, Trumann, AR 72472.

**Bi-vocational youth director** needed. Contact River Road Baptist, P.O. Box 161, Redfield, AR 72132; 501-397-2576; 870-536-4109; or [river013@centurytel.net](mailto:river013@centurytel.net).

First Baptist Church in Carlisle is seeking a **part-time** or **full-time music minister**. Send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 25, Carlisle, AR 72024.

First Baptist Church, Forrest City, is seeking a **full-time minister of music**. If interested, send resume to 507 N. Rosser St., Forrest City, AR 72335.

Abundant Life School, a ministry of Sylvan Hills FBC, is seeking a **superintendent**. Please submit resume to Keith Brickell at [kbrickell@sylvanhillsfbc.com](mailto:kbrickell@sylvanhillsfbc.com) or call 501-835-2511.

### MISCELLANEOUS

**Grace Fellowship Scholarship** available: Orphaned, abandoned, neglected student/prospective student — OBU or WBC (Christian vocation). Application on Arkansas Baptist Foundation's website: [www.abf.org/scholarships.html](http://www.abf.org/scholarships.html).

The First Baptist Church of Broken Bow, Okla., is celebrating its **100th anniversary** on Sunday, Feb. 26. We extend a warm invitation to all former staff, members and friends. For details about our celebration services, please call us at 580-584-6353 or check our website — [www.fbcbrokenbow.com](http://www.fbcbrokenbow.com). We hope to see you then.



### Celebrating milestones

Clara Shell (left), member of Gravel Hill Baptist Church, Benton, and Gary Gipson, former pastor of Gravel Hill Baptist, both recently celebrated milestones in their time at the church. Shell celebrated 49 years of perfect Sunday school attendance, and Gipson celebrated 26 years as the church's pastor before retiring at the end of December.

### Church life

Greene County Baptist Association will hold its third annual Igniting the Passion evangelism rally at 6:30 p.m. March 12 at East Side Baptist Church, Paragould. Steven Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn., will serve as keynote speaker for the adult session; David McClung, Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions ministries team member, will speak in the student session; and Doug Compton, speaker and founder of Doug Compton Ministries, will speak in the children's session. For more information, contact 870-236-3213, or visit [www.greenecountyba.com](http://www.greenecountyba.com).

Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Conway, will host Ken Medema in concert at 7:30 p.m. March 2. He will also perform during the 10:50 a.m. worship service March 4 and in concert at 7:30 p.m. that night. For more information, contact the church at 501-329-0001.

East Side Baptist Church, Fort Smith, will hold a Leadership Rocks youth conference April 13-14. The event seeks to help students experience the reality that leadership begins at the feet of Jesus. The purpose of the conference is threefold: experience Scripture, Christ-centered worship and leadership development. To register, call 479-452-1482.

tor of Ruddell Hill Baptist Church, Batesville.

### Obituaries

Rozelle Wordingham Palmer Goodson, 91, died Feb. 3. She was married to Raymond Woodrow Palmer, who died in 1942. She later married Carl Edward Goodson, who served as a professor at Ouachita Baptist College (now Ouachita Baptist University) and later as dean of academic affairs. She received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in English from Ouachita and served as assistant director for financial aid. She taught in multiple schools, including at Henderson State University and a Bible college in Little Rock. She is preceded in death by both her husbands, and is survived by four daughters, one son, 14 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held Feb. 10 at Berry Chapel on Ouachita's campus.

Patsy Ann Trantham, 84, of Hot Springs, died Feb. 5. Born in Missouri, she married William Trantham, who served as a professor at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia. She was active in the Arkadelphia Music club and the ministries of First Baptist Church, Arkadelphia. She is survived by her husband, William Trantham; one daughter; one son; four grandchildren; and one great-grandson. Memorial services were held Feb. 11.

### On the move

Bill Berry is serving as pastor at First Baptist Church, Star City. He most recently was a chaplain in the U.S. Army.

Jason Mears is serving on the staff of Central Baptist Church, Magnolia, as minister to students.

Alan Brown is serving as pastor of Freeman Heights Baptist Church, Berryville. He most recently was pas-

To submit church news, email [jessica@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:jessica@arkansasbaptist.org) or call 800-838-2272, ext. 5153.

## Happy Birthday!

to all the missionary kids attending college who are celebrating birthdays in the month of March.

- ◆ March 8: Anthony Ridgway, OBU Box 3171, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Bulgaria.
- ◆ March 9: Reece Franklin, OBU Box 3874, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Japan.
- ◆ March 11: Melanie Williams, OBU Box 3147, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Thailand.
- ◆ March 22: Jared Carlin, OBU Box 3366, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Turkey

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### ABCHomes seeks servant-minded people who are called to a ministry, not just a job.

■ ABCHomes is seeking houseparent couples for the Baptist Home in Monticello, Boys Ranch in Harrison and Emergency Receiving Home in Judsonia. These full-time positions include salary, medical insurance, life insurance and paid leave. For information: Children's Home, contact Randy Luper 870.367.5358 or [rluper@abchomes.org](mailto:rluper@abchomes.org); Boys Ranch, contact Bill VonderMehden 870.741.5784 or [bvondermehden@abchomes.org](mailto:bvondermehden@abchomes.org); Judsonia Emergency shelter, contact Sean Culpepper 501.455.8554 or [sculpepper@abchomes.org](mailto:sculpepper@abchomes.org)

■ ABCHomes is seeking a case manager for the Baptist Home in Monticello. For more information, contact Randy Luper, 870.367.5358 or [rluper@abchomes.org](mailto:rluper@abchomes.org).

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View podcasts, videos,  
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[www.arkansasbaptist.org](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org)

## A special Baby: Rejoice

What's the worst thing that could happen to you? Answers will surely vary from person to person. Most of us imagine things like losing a loved one, being fired or losing a job. The most challenging things in life often happen when we are most afraid.

Look at Mary. She was a young girl, probably in her teens. Betrothed to marry Joseph, she lived a life of purity. She honored God, yet found herself pregnant. Imagine how terrifying it would have been to be in that situation (Luke 1:27-31). It would be natural to have questions such as these racing through

your mind: What will people think and say? Will my family or friends be disappointed? Will they reject me? Will Joseph? How am I supposed to move forward from this?

During times of struggle and uncertainty, it is important for us to seek God for clarity and for a vision of how He can use it in the big picture of His plan. Notice the way that Mary's fear was converted to a life calling when God told her how important her Baby would be (Luke 1:32). Mary was an ordinary person who found herself in an extraordinary situation. She was no deity, but God used her to help bring redemp-

tion and salvation to His people. When Christ is involved, we see that those difficult and uncertain times are the times when we learn the most. God is able to use hard times to help us grow and to draw us closer to Him. Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, remember what God has done for you and ask Him how He may use a hard time in your life to further His kingdom. It's amazing how, when

we are submitted to God's will and His authority, He equips us to glorify Him.

Remember this also: Our decisions in life affect those around us. Just as Mary realized the example she could set for generations (Luke 1:38, 42, 46-48), we, too, must realize that in every situation, life affords us the opportunity to set a godly example and bring glory to Christ.

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE MARCH 4, 2012

Jason Campbell  
college ministry associate  
Geyer Springs FBC, Little Rock

Scripture passages:  
Luke 1:26-38, 42-48

Nothing can parch a person more than an Arkansas summer – those dog days of August when the mercury in the thermometer threatens to bust through the top. It causes a person to long for a tall glass of ice water or, for many of us as children, a drink from the hose.

I remember as a boy playing in the yard all day, riding my bike up and down the road and coming to the point of near heat exhaustion be-

fore I would realize that I needed a drink. A soda wouldn't quench my thirst; it could not satisfy that longing my body had for water.

I look at this passage of Scripture, and I can identify with the psalmist. I get so busy with life – running from place to place and staying busy with the de-

mands of being a husband, father, pastor and friend – that I allow my soul to become parched. It will hit

### BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE MARCH 4, 2012

Daniel Haigwood  
pastor  
Hermitage Baptist, Hermitage  
Scripture passages:  
Psalm 42:1-11; 43:1-5

## A unique Person: Praise God

Does God ever show up or speak to your heart at unexpected times? Everyone expects God to speak at church or in Bible study. But what about the times you feel Him tugging at your heart or convicting you about something as you go through your day-to-day tasks? Sometimes that can be intimidating. Perhaps you are intimidated because of what God is asking of you. Other times you are intimidated by God's very presence, realizing your unworthiness to have such a relationship with Him. Either way, you are not alone. Shortly after the birth of Jesus, the shepherds were "terrified" by the angel and the glory of

the Lord that appeared to deliver a message to them (Luke 2:8-15). In this account, we can see three truths that challenge us to overcome fear and trust God.

First, an angel of God told them not to fear (Luke 2:8-10). Why would they be so afraid? This is a common response to the presence of God. The shepherds were performing daily tasks when their lives were abruptly interrupted by God. Initially, they had no clue what God was doing, yet they knew they could trust Him. We don't have to fully understand the hows and whys of God, but we should always be bold in obeying His call.

Second, Christ is Lord (Luke 2:11-14). What an amazing proclamation of God's love! God promised a Messiah,

and He had been delivered! The birth of our Lord displayed God's love for the world and reminds us that He keeps His promises. We can trust God in all of our decisions.

If He is God enough to deliver the Messiah, then He is God enough to know what is best for our lives.

Third, we can experience Him

(Luke 2:15)! After receiving God's message, the shepherds went to Bethlehem to see God's promise

fulfilled. It's one thing to hear about God. However, when we experience Him, our lives are forever changed. Praise God for His presence on Earth and in our lives.

When we trust God, we overcome fears and move from learning about Christianity to experiencing it. Are you experiencing God in your life?

### EXPLORE THE BIBLE MARCH 11, 2012

Jason Campbell  
college ministry associate  
Geyer Springs FBC, Little Rock

Scripture passage:  
Luke 2:3-20

As a pastor, one of the greatest compliments a person can give me is that they feel comfortable coming to speak with me. As a pastor, I want people to have the freedom to be themselves and not fear ridicule or condemnation while talking to me. A few weeks ago, one of the ladies at a local store made a comment to me.

She said, "Preacher, you're like a real person. I feel like I can tell you anything."

Now after a moment of laughter, I told her I hoped that what she was learning from me was that God was also that approachable.

In this Psalm, I see a man who knows that God is approachable. He starts the Psalm with a simple request, "Incline Your ear, O LORD" (Psalm 86:1, NASB).

It might seem like a simple re-

### BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE MARCH 11, 2012

Daniel Haigwood  
pastor  
Hermitage Baptist, Hermitage  
Scripture passages:  
Psalm 86:1-13, 15-16

## I call on You

You will answer me" (Psalm 86:7, NASB).

And how true it is that when we call on the Lord, He will answer us. There is no fear on my part when I pray, wondering if God hears my prayers or if He is listening to my prayers. I know He hears and is listening.

The Lord invites us to call on Him, saying, "Call to Me and I will answer" (Jer. 33:3, NASB).

And that is what we have to do. Through our relationships with Christ, we can approach the throne of God with boldness. I love calling out to my Lord. And even more so, I love knowing that He is listening.



## ABSC calendar

- **Feb. 24:** Compensation Planning Workshop – Emmanuel Baptist Church, Piggott
  - **Feb. 24-25:** PraiseFest – Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock
  - **Feb. 28:** Compensation Planning Workshop – Williams Baptist College, Walnut Ridge
  - **March 1:** Preparing for Retirement Seminar – First Baptist Church, Dumas
  - **March 3:** Disaster Relief Training – Trinity Baptist Church, Searcy
  - **March 4-11:** Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering – Nationwide
  - **March 6:** Preparing for Retirement Seminar – Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro
  - **March 8-9:** Partners In Ministry – ABSC Building, Little Rock
  - **March 9-10:** State Handbell Festival – Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock
  - **March 10:** Disaster Relief Training – First Baptist Church, Mountain View
  - **March 10:** Hispanic Women's Conference – Iglesia Tabernaculo Bautista, Jonesboro
  - **March 10:** State Bible Drill – First Southern Baptist Church, Bryant
  - **March 12-13:** Partners In Ministry – ABSC Building, Little Rock
- For more information on events, go to [www.absc.org](http://www.absc.org), or call 800-838-2272.

### Mark your calendar

# YEC

Youth Evangelism  
Conference

March 30-31

Statehouse Convention  
Center, Little Rock



# Aug. 4

Statehouse  
Convention Center,  
Little Rock

## Kaleo Arkansas '12 set for April

KALEO ARKANSAS '12, is set for April 21 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

The purpose of the one-day event is to help students become the leaders God calls them to be and strengthen the overall leadership in churches.

The event will feature Jeff Iorg, president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, as speaker.

The band Jupiter Wind will also

perform during the conference.

The event will help students understand, define and live out the call to ministry. Breakout sessions include Next Steps to Innovative Church Planting, Calling May Mean Two Careers, Dangers Every Minister Should Avoid and Experiencing God's Call: How to Know for Sure.

For more information or to register, visit [kaleoarkansas.org](http://kaleoarkansas.org).



Iorg



Jupiter Wind will perform at the conference.

## Ministry training sessions set

CHAPLAINCY and ministry training events will be held in April. Sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention missions ministries team, the events are designed to help prepare Arkansas Baptists to minister in crisis situations.

Critical Incident Stress Management ICISF-certified training will take place April 25-26 at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Building and April 27-28 at Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville. The April 25-26 session will offer

training in Emotional and Spiritual Care in Disaster Operations, as well as in Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support. The April 27-28 session will offer training in Group Crisis Intervention.

Police and Fire Chaplain Basic Training will be held April 27-28 at Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville. The 12-hour course will equip both current and future police and fire chaplains with basic skills, including death notification and responding to a crisis situation.

Ministry Training Day is set for April 28 at Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville. This training – meant for pastors, deacons, Sunday school teachers, care group leaders and church members – will focus on health care ministry, prison and jail ministry, re-entry and aftercare ministry and how to begin nontraditional chaplaincy outreaches.

For more information on all events, visit [www.absc.org/chaplaincyevents](http://www.absc.org/chaplaincyevents) or call Pam Rosinbaum at 800-838-2272, ext. 5249.

## Children's ministry events planned

ARKANSAS BAPTISTS involved in children's ministry will have the opportunity to take part in a number of children's ministry events this spring and summer.

Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) vacation Bible school training events are scheduled to take place from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. April 10 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, and April 12 at Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro.

The Heart of the Child Convention is set for April 20-21 at First Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, Okla. The conference, sponsored in part by the ABSC, is for those involved in preschool and children's ministry and will include a special track for senior pastors, featuring Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources. For more information, visit [www.heartofthechild.net](http://www.heartofthechild.net).

The Every Child Is a Gift – Weekday Early Education Workshop 2012 is designed for those ministering to preschoolers. It is set for July 23 at First Baptist Church, Rogers, and July 26-27 at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock. Though the workshop targets those working in a weekday setting, the classes will benefit anyone working with preschoolers. For more information, visit [www.absc.org/childhood](http://www.absc.org/childhood).



## 2012 ABSC disaster relief training

– **March 3:** Trinity Baptist Church, Searcy

Units scheduled to attend training: Feeding – Calvary; Recovery – Union Valley, Valley Baptist Church, Caroline.

– **March 10:** First Baptist Church, Mountain View

Units scheduled to attend training: Feeding – Independence; Recovery – Independence, Rocky Bayou.

– **March 17:** First Baptist Church, Brinkley

Units scheduled to attend training: Feeding – Forrest City; Recovery – Harmony, Centennial, Arkansas Valley.

– **March 24:** Fair Park Baptist

Church, Russellville

Units scheduled to attend training: Feeding – Washington/Madison; Recovery – Arkansas River Valley, North Central Arkansas; Show-er – First Baptist Church, Ozark.

– **March 31:** Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church, Harrison

Units scheduled to attend training: Feeding – North Arkansas; Recovery – White River, Big Creek.

**Regional training agenda for new disaster relief volunteers\***

– 8:00–8:30: Picture taking and registration (new volunteers only)

– 8:30–8:45: Introduction/training agenda

– 8:45–10:15: Involving South-

ern Baptist in disaster relief

– 10:15–10:30: Break

– 10:30–11:00: Paperwork for new volunteers

– 11:00–12:30: Initial safe food handling (Unit Blue Cap)

– 11:00–12:30: Initial recovery training (Unit Blue Cap)

– 12:30–1:00: Lunch

– 1:00–3:00: Initial hands-on training (feeding, recovery). Blue Caps conduct new volunteer unit training.

\*Each Unit Blue Cap is responsible for conducting update training for his unit.

For more information on disaster relief, contact Bill Cantrell or Pam Rosinbaum at 501-376-4791, ext. 5249.

# YEC challenges students to walk with Christ

LITTLE ROCK – Two top youth communicators, an emerging singer-songwriter and a Christian rock band will headline the 2012 Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Youth Evangelism Conference (YEC).

Set for March 30-31 at the Statehouse Convention Center in downtown Little Rock, the conference includes nationally-known youth communicator Clayton King and Christian illusionist Drew Worsham.

King, who lives in Boiling Springs, N.C., is founder of Crossroads Worldwide. He has spoken at youth conferences, camps, retreats, rallies and churches across the United States. King has traveled extensively internationally, preaching the gospel. He has also written six books and is married with two boys.

Worsham travels around the country performing illusions with the purpose of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is a native of Nacogdoches, Texas.

Christian rock band Fireflight will perform at the conference. The band has had five songs – “You Decide,” “Waiting,” “Unbreakable,”

“Stand Up” and “Desperate” – reach the top of the Christian charts. One of the group’s songs, “Unbreakable,” was picked up by NBC-TV for prime-time television promotion. The band’s newest album, “Now,” will be released March 6 and features the No. 1 single, “Stay Close.”

Kristian Stanfill, an emerging singer/songwriter who has performed at Passion Conferences and on the Passion World Tour, will also perform. His songs “Say Say,” “Always” and “Forever Reign” appear on recent Passion albums.

Sean Mills, a member of the ABSC evangelism and church growth team, said YEC is a “powerful conference,” bringing together hundreds of teenagers from across the state to worship and hear the Word of God.

“This conference will challenge students in their personal walk with Christ and motivate them to go back to their community and share Christ with their friends,” he said.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 30. The conference will conclude at 1 p.m. March 31.

To register, go to [www.absc.org/yec](http://www.absc.org/yec).

*“This conference will challenge students in their personal walk with Christ.”*

Sean Mills  
ABSC



Students participate in the 2011 Youth Evangelism Conference.

# YEC

Youth Evangelism Conference  
Arkansas Baptist State Convention



Clayton King  
speaker



Kristian Stanfill  
worship



Drew Worsham  
illusionist



Fireflight  
concert

March 30-31, 2012  
Cost \$25

Statehouse Convention Center  
Downtown Little Rock

For More Information: [www.absc.org/yec](http://www.absc.org/yec) 800-838-2272 ext 5222

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■ The **Every Resident Family Plan** offers churches a premium rate when they send the *ABN* to all their resident households. Resident families are calculated to be at least one-fourth of the church's Sunday school enrollment. Churches who send only to members who request a subscription do not qualify for this lower rate of \$7.75 per year (print) and \$4 (digital) for each subscription.

■ The **Group Plan** allows church members to receive a discount when 10 or more individuals send their subscriptions together through their local church. Subscribers pay

\$8.75 per year (print) and \$5 (digital).

■ **Individual subscriptions** may be purchased at the rate of \$11 per year (print) and \$6 (digital).

Changes of address by individuals may be made with the address label above.

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Individual subscriptions for both editions may be purchased at [www.arkansasbaptist.org](http://www.arkansasbaptist.org). Please call the *ABN* office to discuss church plans.

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