



Inside:

- Former ABSC staffer to lead WMU
- Rogers church takes aim at marksmen
- Faith reconciliation in the Delta
- ‘Mentorship’ key to E4Call program
- 218 saved on FBC, Beebe, mission

Cooperative Program

Arkansas Baptist giving reaches state, nation and world

Special section



UrbanPromise takes gospel to neighborhood

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – This summer, children's laughter rang through the hallways of the Agape Community Temple Servants (ACTS) church every weekday for five hours. Through UrbanPromise Arkansas, ACTS church member, Kristin Walker, is sparking change in the Baring Cross neighborhood of North Little Rock.

Beginning her journey at UrbanPromise Delaware after she graduated from Arkansas State University in 2007, Walker spent eight years on the mission team in Wilmington, Del., before bringing the project back to Arkansas.



Walker

Growing up as a member of Park Hill Baptist Church of North Little Rock, Walker felt called to bring UrbanPromise to her hometown.

Hitting the streets of the Baring Cross neighborhood, Walker recruited local high school students to be both leaders in the program and visible role models in the community. With life experiences similar to the students in UrbanPromise, these “street leaders” were able to relate to and mentor their assigned children with patience and understanding.

Fifteen-year-old Urban Promise Arkansas street leader Mel'von Holmes said that after his father died when he was 5 years old, his mother

See **URBAN** page 11

Lisa Falknor
Special to the ABN

ISRAEL – This past May, he stood at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem listening to Orthodox Jews cry out for God to send the Messiah.

Brandon Watson, associate pastor for young adults at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, and his team of eight Arkansans – including six college students – partnering with Jews for Jesus prayed that the people at the wall would see the Messiah had already come.

Watson's connection with Israel and Jews for Jesus began when he led about 60 members from Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, on a tourist trip to Israel in 2014. Their tour guide introduced himself as David Brickner, an ordained Baptist minister and head of Jews for Jesus since 1996.

“God started stirring in our hearts on that trip about the brokenness of the Holy Land, how the Jewish people are an unreached people group who need to know the Lord,” Watson said.

Of the 6.2 million Jews in Israel, only 5,000 are said to know Jesus as Savior.

Seeking the Messiah



Mission team members from Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock pray at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem.

While overlooking different sections of the country from their hotel balcony each night, he and roommate David Winkler prayed that others would come to Israel and tell the Jew-

ish people about Jesus.

Watson sensed God asking him, “Why not you?”

So, this year Watson returned to the Holy Land in May, sponsored in part by the

Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC), this time focusing not on tourism but on evangelism. Jews for Jesus

See **MESSIAH** page 10

Alcohol-church debate erupts after pastor fired

Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION has long been a hot topic for discussion among Southern Baptists, and with the recent termination of high-profile South Carolina pastor Perry Noble because of “in-

creased reliance on alcohol,” among other factors, the topic has recently jumped back into the denominational spotlight.

In the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) Podcast 53, host Bill Bumpas talks with Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) staff Dave McClung and Chad Grigsby as well as Paul Hudson, pastor of one-Church in Conway, about the Church's stand on alcohol consumption and how to deal with church

leaders who are struggling with alcohol.

Scriptural prohibition?

Acknowledging that the question of Christians and alcohol consumption is “not an



easy black-and-white answer scripturally,” McClung, who serves on the ABSC church planting team, ex-

plained that abstaining from alcohol “has been the historic position” among Southern

Baptists and that the consumption of alcohol has “always been associated with sin in Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) life.”

However, while that perspective may still be the representative view of the “vast majority” of Southern Baptists, it seems to be changing, particularly among young church leaders, he said.

For many young church planters, “alcohol is a non-issue,” said Chad Grigsby, also a member of ABSC's church planting team.

Grigsby said all church

See **ALCOHOL** page 8

POSTAGE INFORMATION

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

For now, Supreme Court blocks transgender ruling

WASHINGTON (BP) – The U.S. Supreme Court has blocked for now lower-court decisions requiring a Virginia school district to enable a female student who identifies as male to use the boys' restroom.

The justices announced August 3 they had put on hold a June ruling by a federal court ordering the Gloucester County School Board to permit Gavin Grimm to use the male restroom while the case is settled in court. Grimm, 17, is a female biologically but considers herself a male.

The Supreme Court's order, with five justices agreeing on the stay, means Grimm will not be able to use the boys' restroom at school until the justices weigh in on the case. If the high court refuses to review the lower court opinion in the case, the hold will end immediately. If the justices accept the appeal, the stay will remain in force until they issue a ruling.

The order is the latest action in a battle being waged in schools regarding transgender rights – a debate that advocates for such rights have been winning in recent months.

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down in April a federal judge's decision by ruling the school board of the eastern Virginia county violated federal law by refusing to permit transgender students to use the restrooms of the gender with which they identify, regardless of their biological sex. In a 2-1 opinion, the Fourth Circuit panel said the ban on sex discrimination in the Title IX education amendments encompasses gender identity.

In May, the Obama administration issued a sweeping directive on transgender rights.

For more ABN Digest, go to
arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest

Former ABSC staffer to lead WMU

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Sandra Wisdom-Martin, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) of Texas, was unanimously elected executive director/treasurer of WMU, SBC, by the WMU executive board during a special called meeting, July 29-30, in Birmingham, Ala.

Wisdom-Martin succeeds Wanda Lee, who has served as executive director of the 128-year-old missions organization for the past 16 years. Wisdom-Martin, who will begin her new role on Oct. 15, was presented to the board by a search committee appointed in February following Lee's announcement of her intentions to retire.

Prior to leading WMU of Texas since 2010, Wisdom-Martin served as women's missions and ministries director for the Illinois Baptist State Association, 2001-2010; and as Cooperative Program missionary with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, 1991-2001.

"Having served in three different Baptist state conventions, Sandy brings great experience as a leader to this role along with tremendous creativity," said Joy Bolton, executive

director of Kentucky WMU and chair of the search committee. "The affirmations of her leadership received from people in each state where she has served speak volumes. She has earned love and respect through partnerships, missions trips, speaking engagements, and other missions involvement."

Bolton describes Wisdom-Martin as "a thoughtful leader who listens well and brings clarity to complex situations when she speaks."

Lee agrees. "I've had the privilege of observing and working alongside Sandy for many years," she said. "Sandy listens well, considers every possible action before she speaks, and then delivers on what she promises. Her quiet presence puts people at ease while building confidence in the actions to be taken. She will lead WMU well from a place of complete surrender to the Lord."

Complete surrender

"My commitment has always been to walk where God leads," Wisdom-Martin reflected, "yet this has been a diffi-

cult process because I am in a very good place. I love the assignment God has given us (in Texas). This certainly caught my family by surprise and was not a part of our plan, but we believe God is sovereign and all the details of our lives are in His hands. I trust Him completely for the future."

She said what excites her most about this opportunity is to put total trust in the Father, serve Him with reckless abandon and see where the adventure leads. "I don't do what I do because of my employment," Wisdom-Martin continued. "I do what I do because I believe in the restoration of brokenness through hope in Christ. Through WMU, the only reason we do what we do is because He is risen and we must tell the good news."

Linda Cooper, president of national WMU, said Wisdom-Martin clearly serves with humility and compassion and desires to honor God with her life. "Sandy is passionate about the work of WMU and what it represents, but most of all she loves the Lord and desires to share His love with everyone He puts in her path."

In regard to transition of leadership, Lee said, "I am ex-

cited about handing over this important place of service to Sandy and pledge all of my support and prayers as she comes to lead WMU into the future. Her love for missions, missionaries and WMU provides a strong backdrop for developing the vision we need for the future of WMU."

In addition to more than 25 years of experience in state WMU and church and community ministry, including children's missions education camps, Wisdom-Martin has served with more than 50 missions groups in nine different countries; served as national coordinator for Mississippi River Ministry; and writes extensively for WMU publications and others. In WMU, she has served as an associational GA director, associational Acteens director, Campus Baptist Young Women (BYU) president, Mission Friends leader, GA leader, and Acteens co-leader.

Born in southern Illinois, Wisdom-Martin holds a bachelor's degree in social work from Southern Illinois University and a master's in social work from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. She and her husband, Frank, have a daughter, Hannah.



Wisdom-Martin

FBC, Rogers, aims gospel at young marksmen

Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

ROGERS – When 400 young BB gun marksmen, representing 59 teams from 12 states, took aim in Rogers recently at the Daisy National BB Gun Championship Match, some of the youthful shooters and their families may have gotten more than they were aiming for.

While participating in marksmanship competitions and learning about gun safety, BB Gun Championship Match participants also had opportunity to hear the gospel.

For the first time in the 51-year history of the annual championship match for shooters ages 8 to 15, a Christian worship service – BB Church – was offered as an option for attendees on the Sunday morning of competition. Although the championship

match has been held throughout the nation during its history, 2016 marked its seventh consecutive year in Rogers.

Volunteers and ministers from First Baptist Church, Rogers, convened in the John Q. Hammons Convention Center at 6:30 a.m. on Sunday, July 3, to lead a worship service for those attending the championship. The worship service included a short gospel message

by Wade Tomlinson, pastor of missions and Olive Street, First Baptist Church, Rogers, and special music by Cory Epps, associate worship leader, First Baptist Church, Rogers, and his wife Stephanie.

Joe Murfin, vice president of public relations for Daisy, said the idea for the worship service came about as he and others had attended other weekend events in which worship services were offered as options.



Wade Tomlinson speaks at the BB worship event at Hammons Convention Center in Rogers.

Also, he said, in past years, some attendees at the BB Gun Championship Match, the largest national 5-meter BB gun match in the U.S., had inquired about area churches to attend on Sunday mornings.

Offering BB Church at the event venue seemed a convenient way to meet the needs of attendees desiring to worship on Sunday mornings.

"We were privileged to be a part of the first BB Church. We wanted to be involved because we want to support businesses like Daisy and because we saw an opportunity to share God's love with people who may not normally go to church as well as strengthen believers away from their home churches," said Tomlinson.

"Although First Baptist Rogers may not see any direct result from our involvement, our desire is to be a church that gives and serves for kingdom growth. BB Church was an opportunity for us to help expand the kingdom," he said.

The service was well-attended, particularly as this was the service's first year, said Murfin, and he hopes BB Church will become an ongoing part of the annual championship in future years.

Contact Margaret Colson at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.

'Faith' reconciliation in the Delta

Caleb Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

GOULD – Small rural towns in the South are not usually known for their commitment to racial reconciliation. However, First Baptist Church, Gould, has made a conscious decision to open its doors to all members of its community.

First Baptist is a traditionally white church in the Arkansas Delta, about 30 miles south of Pine Bluff. For most of its history the church was not welcoming to African Americans. But this summer they hosted two African-American young men as summer interns through the Arkansas Baptist State Convention's (ABSC) E4Call program.

The church's summer interns, Sanorris "Chump Chump" Garrett and Tra Hill, are students at the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff (UAPB). Both accepted Christ through UAPB's Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) and are currently being discipled by Tavoris "Tee" Uzoigwe, ABSC collegiate and young leaders team member.

One of the major aspects of Garrett and Hill's E4Call internship with First Baptist was their opening up the church's gym to children from the community each day.

According to Larry Toller, First Baptist's pastor, more than 100 children heard the gospel throughout the summer through the church's open gym and basketball clinic outreaches. Five of those 100 also made decisions to follow Christ and begin being discipled.

Both Garrett and Hill had not been baptized at the time of their internship with First Baptist. After forming a relationship with First Baptist over the summer, the two requested to be baptized at the church before returning to school.

"We began talking to them about their desire to be baptized, but they were having difficulty finding a church in Pine Bluff. Since they have had such a connection with our church, they have requested baptism here and will be



FAITH RECONCILIATION – Tavoris "Tee" Uzoigwe, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) collegiate and young leaders team member, baptizes Tra Hill (above left) and Sanorris "Chump Chump" Garrett during a Sunday morning worship service July 24 at First Baptist Church, Gould. Hill and Garrett are students at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and served as E4Call interns with First Baptist this summer. Below (left to right) are: Larry Toller, pastor of First Baptist, Hill, Garrett and Uzoigwe following the service in which Hill and Garrett were baptized. *Photos by Caleb Yarbrough*

seeking a church home in Pine Bluff when they return," said Toller.

Garrett and Hill were baptized by Uzoigwe July 24 at First Baptist. According to Toller, it was the first time African-Americans were baptized by an African-American in the

in baptism, and I have asked Tee to baptize the two that he led to the Lord and discipled today in our witness," he said.

Following the baptisms of Garrett and Hill, Uzoigwe described how he met the two men, shared Christ with them and saw them transformed by the power of God.

Uzoigwe said that Garrett was one of the first students to begin attending a Bible study he started last year. After accepting Christ, Garrett quickly became a leader in UAPB's BCM and began his own Bible study.

Uzoigwe met Hill that same summer. He said that the day after an event where he had pulled Hill aside and talked with him about accepting Christ, Hill showed up to the BCM with a new group of people, most of whom which prayed to accept Christ.

"He was an evangelist even though he wasn't saved yet," said Uzoigwe. "Then he brought four more people and they made professions of faith, and he said, 'OK, I think I can do this.'"

Uzoigwe said that Hill

began sharing Christ with everyone he knew, including his friends, family and even a local drug dealer from the neighborhood in which he grew up in.

"Tra (Hill) got so fired up about the gospel, and only being saved for about two months, that he wanted to share Christ with one of the local drug dealers that he grew up with. He said, 'Hey, I've got something to tell you. You're not going to believe what I've been learning,'" said Uzoigwe.

"The drug dealer was with his protégé ... and you could tell his protégé was a little bit agitated about this God stuff and Tra telling them about Jesus. The protégé said, 'Man, we don't have time for this,'" said Uzoigwe. "And Tra said, 'Man, if you don't want to hear about God, you are on a highway to hell.'"

"So the guy steps back and reaches in his pants and pulls out a gun like he was going to shoot Tra. And you know what Tra does? He steps back and says, 'I'm ready,'" said Uzoigwe.

"So here you have these two guys that have been saved for two months – one who was suffering persecution and one who was about to die for Jesus," Uzoigwe said.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

Missionary family dies in W. Nebraska wreck

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (BP) – A young Christian missionary family of five from Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis is being mourned after a highway crash in western Nebraska took their lives July 31. Jamison and Kathy Pals, both 29, and their three children, Ezra, Violet and Calvin, ages 4 years to 2 months, died when their minivan was rear-ended by a semi-trailer truck in a construction zone on Interstate 80. The Pals were headed to Littleton, Colo., for a final session of training before leaving in late October to serve as missionaries with Christ Bible Institute in Nagoya, Japan, according to a statement released by the church. The couple had sold most of their belongings in preparation for the move and had just left a water park to complete the final three hours of their 13-hour journey, Minneapolis-area media reported.

Alaska drops parental notification of abortion

ALASKA (BP) – The Alaska Supreme Court on July 22 struck down a state law requiring abortionists to give two days' notice to parents before providing abortions to minors. In a 2010 ballot initiative, 56 percent of voters approved what became the law requiring parental notification, but not consent, for a minor's abortion. Now the court says the law is unconstitutional and violates Alaska's equal-protection guarantee. The decision "elevated the demands of abortionists over the rights of parents," said Steven H. Aden, a lawyer for Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) who is seeking to uphold the law.

For more ABN Digest, go to
arkansasbaptist.org/abn-digest

Editorial & Opinion

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..."

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

Cooperation makes an eternal difference

Amid the busyness of life and ministry sometimes it's hard just to sit still and to think.

At a time when the world around us seems to be falling apart – both at home and abroad – it gives me solace to know that the Cooperative Program, Southern Baptists' united giving plan, works quietly in the background supporting strategic ministry and mission efforts that result in thousands upon thousands of people coming to Jesus Christ each year.

While the Cooperative Program may have lost its sheen to some of our kingdom collaborators over the years, I have yet to hear of any denominational effort that has been as

impactful in the worldwide evangelism effort.

For most reading this column I don't have to convince you of CP's importance.

Other than the obvious support of the Great Commission and Acts 1:8 charge to take the gospel to all people everywhere, I offer this

to those who challenge the scriptural basis of CP:

"For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building (1 Cor. 3:9, ESV).

Frank Page, president and CEO of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, perhaps said it best speaking on "the remarkability of the Cooperative Program."

"I do not know of a better plan for any church – small, large, new, growing, graying, or ethnic – to accomplish an Acts 1:8 strategy than through the Cooperative Program!

"Through the Cooperative Program, a church can reach their community, their state, North America, and the Nations with the gospel... consistently, concurrently and completely."

In this edition of the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) you'll find a special section devoted to what is being accomplished through your giving to the Cooperative Program.

Because the ABN and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention believe the CP message is so important, the two entities partner together to send this edition to every Arkansas Baptist church, regardless of whether they subscribe

to their state Baptist newspaper or not.

Read it. Share it. Use it in small group time. The message of the CP is the message

of how Arkansas Baptists are reaching the world for Christ!

Tim Yarbrough is editor/executive director of the *Arkansas Baptist News*.



Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough
Phil. 3:14

Cartoon by Gary Thomas

The Cooperative Program: When Eternal Lives Matter



Changing hearts and minds on abortion: lots of work left

Results of a recent survey by the Pew Research Center, a highly regarded polling organization, illustrate just how far we have yet to go in changing Americans' attitudes about abortion. We have made some progress in helping people in this country see the humanity of the unborn child – just not enough yet.

So, while we desire more rapid change in how people perceive the sanctity of human life, we need to acknowledge that great social change is achieved at a glacial pace. The abolition of slavery is a perfect example. That fact

is not comforting, but it is reality.

Overall, 56 percent of adults in the U.S. say that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. Only 41 percent believe it should be illegal all or most of the time.

The sharp contrasts in how Americans view abortion show just how divided we are.

Consider the following. Relative to age, there seems to be a disconnect. Fully 62 percent of young adults view abortion as not that important, while 53 percent of all adults hold that view. Clearly, we are not doing well

in communicating the pro-life narrative to younger folks.

In terms of ideology, the differences are vast. Conservative Republicans hold that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases at a 68 percent rate, while 84 percent of liberal Democrats feel that abortion should be legal in all or most cases. Independents fall somewhere in the middle with 60 percent agreeing that abortion should be legal in all or most cases.

As one might expect, the differences among faith com-

munities are telling. Seventy-five percent of white evangelical Protestants hold that abortion is morally wrong, while Hispanic Catholics and black

Protestants register at 64 percent and 58 percent, respectively. The figures for white Catholics and white mainline Protestants are

53 percent and 38 percent, respectively. Those describing themselves as unaffiliated with only 25 percent describing abortion as morally wrong.

Those of us believers who hold deeply to the godly principle we call sanctity of life are and should be saddened by the findings of the Pew Research Center, but we should not be despondent and in despair for a couple of reasons. First, we have made some modest headway in changing hearts and minds about abortion. We are going in the right direction; it's just that we would like for the change to occur at a much faster clip.

And, second, we have been given a godly mandate to engage the culture by speaking truth to power with love and humility. Psalm 82:3-4 (NKJV) directs us to, "Defend

See **ABORTION** page 6



Faith & Ethics

Larry Page



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Are Southern Baptists 'evangelical'?



Baptists Ask

Ken Gore

The term “evangelical” is difficult to explain, because of its diverse historical, theological and general usage. Historically, evangelicalism arose as a “middle ground” between the theological liberalism and fundamentalism of the early 20th century. Evangelicals adhered to the Scriptures as their sole authority of faith, but they did not shy away from reasoned research and teaching. The movement spawned Fuller Theological Seminary and *Christianity Today* magazine. In 1942, several denominations formed the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) as a conservative alternative to the National Council of Churches.

Theologically, “evangelical” is not easy to define. In 1989, historian David Bebbington summarized evangelicalism into four doctrinal beliefs: biblicism (all essential spiritual truth is found within the Bible), crucicentrism (the centrality of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross), conversionism (individuals need change through the gospel of Christ) and activism (the gospel needs to be expressed through a believer’s life). When nine individuals unveiled “An Evangelical Manifesto” in 2008, they declared “who Evangelicals are and what they stand for.” While many agreed, others didn’t, citing its lack of precise theology.

In popular culture, “evangelical” often refers to Christians who consider themselves conservative in their beliefs, practices and attitudes. Often these extend into the political system, but they do not have to. When they do, they do not necessarily focus upon any one particular political party.

While Southern Baptists have never joined the NAE, most could adhere to its broad statement of faith. The Baptist Faith and Message is a much more specific document. Southern Baptists may call themselves “evangelical,” but not all “evangelicals” see themselves as Southern Baptists.

When Southern Baptists describe themselves as “evangelical,” they must realize that society views the term popularly, rather than historically or theologically. If they use the term, they should do so with care.

Ken Gore is chairman of the department of Christian studies at Williams Baptist College.

Coming home from camp

As I sit down to write, I’m recovering from a week of too little sleep after attending PraiseWorks with my daughters and one other young lady from our church. PraiseWorks for youth and JoyWorks for children are amazing Arkansas Baptist sponsored camps that teach so very much, and my girls could not wait to get there this summer.

I looked forward to the week, too, but I honestly did not intend to be very involved. Thanks to the portability of my job, I carried it right to camp with me instead of taking the week off. Although I intended to mingle with the camp events some, my primary intent was to just be there to provide the necessary sponsor for the girls while most of my focus went into work.

But day one convicted me.

I went to PraiseWorks, knowing these campers would be challenged in so many ways. But I was forgetting a key component. The Lord had to remind me what a challenge it would be for these youth to take home what they had learned. They would need help, encouragement and support every step of the way.

My job as a sponsor was not to just allow them to be at camp. It was to share in their challenges and help them

put what they had learned into practice upon their return to normal life.

That help, though, would never happen if I remained on the fringes and did not truly listen to the Lord for myself. Yes, I still had to work. But, I realized that I could not just hole up with my computer and shut out the camp world.

Instead, I had to let the Lord help me balance responsibilities with a heart sensitive to His plan for the week.

Sadly, this is not just a camp issue. Daily, it is so easy to get focused on our little worlds, to process through life in our corners and to only marginally engage in the community that is the body of believers. Oh, my friends, how I pray that we will stretch ourselves beyond those tiny worlds. How I pray that we will become actively involved in the growth of those around us. How I pray that our eyes will be opened to ways we can equip fellow believers both in our immediate communities and around the state – and even the world.

May God nudge us as a body of believers to individually listen so we can jointly work, helping one another accomplish what God teaches us in our “camp” moments.

Ann Hibbard is a member of East End Baptist Church in East End. Read her blog at annhibbard.com.



Uncovered Dish

Ann Hibbard



A clean shop makes a difference

After several days of sorting, arranging, organizing and cleaning, I sat down on the stool next to my workbench and basked in the satisfaction of a clean, well-organized workshop. Everything from the saws and drill press to the soldering station and electronic testing equipment had been perfectly positioned. Every hand tool, socket and drill bit was perfectly organized and quickly accessible in the new 24-drawer tool chest. It was a good day.

But, before I could turn out the light, lock the door and walk over to the house for dinner, I was overcome with several new creative ideas. Before I knew it, there were shavings under the drill press, bits of wire insulation on floor and smoke rolling off the tip of the soldering iron. What had happened? There is something about a clean shop that stirs creativity and motivates one to work.

You see, environment matters. Not just in a shop, but other places too – places like Sunday school rooms. There was a recent study of 25 public school first-graders whose classroom was rearranged and remodeled over a period of four months to include fun and innovative elements such as comfortable reading spaces, fish, plants and displays of student artwork. The children’s reactions were recorded through interviews, student journals and observation.

The first-graders expressed ownership and pride in their artwork being included in the classroom decor, and their journals, comments and drawings expressed appreciation for the aesthetic additions to their environment.

Students in the study said that being comfortable helped them feel at home in their classroom, which in turn helped them learn. Some of their comments were:

“I feel relaxed. When I’m relaxed, I’m more ready to learn.”

“It’s like a little living room when the plants are here.”

“Up here [in the reading loft] makes me learn because I read, and it’s comfortable reading here.”

The same holds true in a church environment – and not just with children, but with adults too.

It is important to annually assess the learning environments in our churches. The décor should be up-to-date and age appropriate, and it should say something about the personality of the class. Clutter should be eliminated. Obnoxious odors should be dealt with. The room

should feel warm and inviting.

In our churches, we are not just “teaching;” we are about the business of making disciples of Jesus Christ. It is what Jesus Himself commanded us to do. Everyone thinks better, learns better and interacts better in a well-kept environment. Think of your classroom as a workshop that is specifically outfitted to make disciples. This Sunday, make a conscious effort to examine your “discipleship shop” (Bible study room) with a fresh set of eyes; then develop a makeover plan. You might be amazed at the difference it makes!

Eric W. Ramsey is an evangelism and mission strategist and serves as associate pastor of First Baptist Church, Fort Smith.



Answering the Call

Eric Ramsey



Support the ABN!

A fund for the Arkansas Baptist News (ABN) has been established at the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. Consider helping the official news journal of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for years to come by including the ABN in your will or by making a contribution to the ABN. Contact the Foundation at 501-376-0732 for more information.

Letter to the Editor

Support of Donald Trump

Why are Ronnie Floyd and Robert Jeffress supporting Donald Trump? Haven't they heard how the presidential candidate degrades women, Hispanics and about his stance on other issues that are deplorable?

If the recent gathering of evangelical Christians with Trump in Washington wasn't a political rally, why did Jeffress say, "If Donald Trump is elected as president, evangelicals will have a true friend in the White House?"

If that isn't political, I don't know what is.

If Trump is a Christian he should stand for people he would represent.

Of course, I wonder if our vote still counts anymore – it seems by the time the votes are counted, or rather before, the president is already elected.

What's more, I believe the vote should be by popular vote by all the people, rather than an electoral college.

I'm not a Republican or Democrat – I'm for the person – and I probably won't vote in November because I'm afraid of both candidates.

Furthermore, I think church and state should be separate in elections and as president. I don't believe that a pastor should voice his opinion on the electoral candidates.

Jeffress may be friends with Donald Trump, but friendship only goes so far in expressing views in the political realm.

Doll Cochran
Corning

ABORTION

continued from page 4

the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked." We may not bring about the end of legal abortion, but we must work diligently toward that worthy goal. God expects our faithfulness to His causes. The results are often beyond our control, but act we must. May we be found faithful in defending the most innocent and defenseless among us.

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

ABSC Agencies

New majors at OBU expand career options

One of the things that makes Ouachita Baptist University a great value is our commitment to provide high-quality degree programs that meet the needs of today's graduates. As a Christian liberal arts institution, Ouachita promotes timeless values that serve our graduates well in a world that desperately needs people of faith and integrity in every walk of life. These values, however, must be integrated with new knowledge and skills to address the needs of a changing workforce. In recent months, our faculty has developed several new degree programs that promise to open new pathways to rewarding careers.

Beginning this fall the Hickingbotham School of Business will offer a major in finance. Business students have long been able

to take courses in finance, but elevating this area to a major provides greater depth of preparation for careers in banking and finance. Of particular interest for some will be the option to seek certification as a financial planner.

A new interdisciplinary major in music business will prepare graduates for work in the music industry. This degree combines two highly regarded areas of Ouachita's academic program to address such emphases as music publishing, commercial music, music production, songwriting and instrumentation.

New degree options for science students include a major in biophysics that combines course work in math, chemistry, physics and biology,

leading to a variety of career opportunities. Students interested in teaching science can pursue a physics/mathematics teaching emphasis, a new option for combined licensure.

The Sutton School of Social Sciences offers two new majors geared toward growing fields of service. One is public

history, which will prepare students to communicate historical knowledge in public settings such as museums, archives, tourism and historic preservation. The other is an interdisciplinary major in social justice studies. Courses in history, psychology, political science and sociology give graduates tools to address persistent social ills – from

discrimination and racism to violence and human trafficking – while a required theology course grounds the study of social justice in our Christian tradition. Graduates are prepared for advanced study or careers in fields such as social work, legal studies and non-profit or governmental agencies.

Whether developing new majors or updating existing programs, Ouachita has never been more committed to ensuring that our graduates can thrive in a rapidly changing economy. At the same time, Ouachita's focus on educating the whole person means our graduates have encountered timeless truths and eternal values that shape not just careers, but lives of meaning and service to God and others.

Stan Poole serves as vice president for academic affairs at Ouachita Baptist University.



Ouachita Baptist

Stan Poole

CP a key to Foundation ministry

Here at the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, we are so thankful for the Cooperative Program (CP) funds we receive each year. These funds have advanced kingdom work in Arkansas and the world through the Foundation. We are able to serve as a resource for churches and entities so that they can operate and perform ministry in the most tax and financially efficient way. We are able to advise ministry supporters, pastors and those in denominational service in gift and estate planning to help them better steward the assets with which they have been blessed. We are able to encourage others

through distributions totaling \$28,515,663 this past year alone.

I was recently asked, "How important are the CP funds the Foundation receives?" My response was critical in two distinct ways. First of all, these funds are critical to the essence of our servant's existence. We do not employ fundraising staff or solicit our own funding. Instead, we provide knowledge and expertise in services to the churches and ministries to ensure more funds are distributed directly to them while avoiding potential conflicts. We do not hold any events,

programs or advertising outside the churches and entities of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC).

Secondly, these funds are critical in that they provide more than 30 percent of the Foundation's operating budget. Without these funds, we would be required to pass along the costs involved in these services directly to the churches and ministries we serve. Accordingly, every dollar removed from our budget could directly impact the budgets and amounts distributed to ministries at the state and national level each year.

Without the CP, we would risk changing the nature of our existence. In an April 4, 2016, blog, Ronnie Floyd, pastor of the Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, said, "Entertaining societal methodology jeopardizes our unified plan of giving." Thankfully, the Foundation receives funds from the CP so that we can exist to serve and equip the churches and ministries of the ABSC and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Thank you, Arkansas Baptists, for allowing us to serve through your CP giving!

Bobby Thomas is president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.



Baptist Foundation

Bobby Thomas

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'Mentorship' key to E4Call internship program

EXPERIENCES that help mold and shape the ministry calling of college students and recent high school graduates are a natural outgrowth of the E4Call program.

Cory Platt, who was a summer missionary two years ago in the program, now coordinates E4Call for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC).

Platt said "mentorship" of E4Call summer missionaries is a key aspect of the program, which he said celebrated its largest year in 2016.

"The state convention partners with the local church in training and mentoring students called to all possibilities of ministry," said Platt, adding, "E4Call is building towards mentoring through resources such as blogs, literature, networking and hands-on training. We will continue to pursue the most effective methods and will always be open to innovative techniques."

E4Call, formerly known as KALEO, derives its name from Ephesians 4:1 in which the Apostle Paul calls believers to "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" (ESV). The program is a ministry of the ABSC's missions and college and young leaders teams and in cooperation with local Arkansas Baptist churches and associations, as well as the North American Mission Board and International Mission Board.

Platt said orientation of E4Call summer missionaries is essential to the "mentorship experience."

"It is a commissioning nothing (else) compares to. So as orientation is to the summer effectiveness of the mentorship, debriefing is to the summer experience of that mentorship. This year at debriefing many things were offered," he said.

"We also offered 'what next' direction for post-summer mentorship. I believe the final and most important aspects were the group and individual interviews. Those consisted of the leadership team helping the mentors and student define the experience of their summer mentorships. In the midst of ministry, students and mentors can often feel lost, jumbled and spread thin.

Interviews at the end of the summer experience have, year after year, helped students and mentors define their summer experiences."

Jordin Crow, 22, said E4Call reaffirmed his call to ministry.

"It has confirmed in me that I love to do ministry, though God has not confirmed to me His specific calling. I was able to get to know and teach three Japanese students. I took them to hike Pinnacle Mountain. On my birthday, they bought me a gift."

Brandon Brigance, 20, said, "It affirmed my call and broadened it. God took away some limitations that I had placed on my call."

Allison Elkins, 20, said the summer through E4Call "has given me the courage to trust God to provide for me in every situation, but especially in the ones that make me most uncomfortable. As the summer intern, I had the opportunity to serve in a lot of different areas. One of the ways I got to serve was in a mission trip to Guatemala. We held a vacation Bible school at a local school while we were there. Through that ministry 38 children came to know the Lord as their personal Lord and Savior."

Jesse Walker, 19, recounted a conversation had with a student at youth camp who asked, "Can God really love me with all the sin in my life? How can I come back to God?" and "Am I too far gone?"

"I could tell from his tone of voice and the questions he was asking that he was truly confused about what he needed to do in life. He was genuinely interested in turning his life around and had trouble believing in God's encompassing grace and His infinite love for us. Your prayers would be greatly appreciated for this young man and for God to continually reveal Himself and His unending love!"

E4Call participants

Following is a list of the E4Call participants in 2016: Samuel Beavers, served at East Side Baptist, Pine Bluff; Brandon Brigance, served at First Baptist, Pocahontas; Austin Brown, served at Freeman Heights Baptist Church, Berryville; Tanner Clubbs, served



The Arkansas Baptist State Convention's (ABSC) E4Call summer internship program is based on Ephesians 4:1 in which the Apostle Paul calls believers to, "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" (ESV). According to Cory Platt, a former summer missionary with the program, one of E4Call's major focuses is mentorship and discipling the young leaders serving with the program. Above are some of the E4Call students who served in churches and ministries across Arkansas.

at First Baptist Church, England; Jordin Crow, served at Journey Campus of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro; Kalum Douglas, served at West Baptist Church, Batesville; Jonathan Drendel, served at First Baptist Church, Maumelle; Emily Duncan, served at Metro Church, Centerton; Allie Elkins, served at Central Community, Harrisburg; Joel Falknor, served at Washington Madison Baptist Association, Fayetteville; Conor Fogle, served at The Compass Church, Batesville; Maggie Foreman, served at North Pulaski Baptist Association, North Little Rock; Sanorris Garrett, served at First Baptist Church, Gould; Danielle Jayroe, served at First Baptist Church, Marion; Emily Johnson, served at First Baptist Church, Harrison; Bekah Kelly, served at First Baptist Church, Huntsville; Meredith Koontz, served at Washington Madison Baptist Association, Fayetteville; Jorden Lawrence, served at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith; Dora Lwamba, served at First Baptist Church, Huntsville; Cindy Meador, served at First Baptist Church, Greenwood; Mario Moore, served at First Baptist Church, Huntsville; Joel Murdock, served at ForeFront Mission Church, Fort Smith; Ryan Porter, served at First Baptist Church, West Fork; Taylor Short, served at ForeFront Mission Church, Fort Smith; Colton Sims, served at First Baptist Church,

Greenwood; Ashton Spencer, served at Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith; Garrett Tatum, served at North Pulaski Baptist Association, North Little Rock; Winston Turner, served at First Baptist Church, Greenwood; Jesse Walker, served at First Baptist Church, Norphlet; Shaleena White, served at Barceloana Road Baptist Church, Hot Springs Village; Madison White, served at The Compass Church, Batesville; Crystal Williams, served at Fianna Hills Baptist Church,

Fort Smith; Colby Williamson, served at Central Baptist Church, Magnolia; Steven and Leslie Wood, served at Straw-floor Baptist Church in Jonesboro.

Two students participated in the MarketPlace summer program. They were Bethany Dorton, who served at Trinity Baptist Church, Searcy, and Luke Carter, who served at an insurance office in Searcy.

More information about the E4Call program is available at cylarkansas.com/e4call.

FAITH

continued from page 3

"That's how you know God is real. I'm just amazed. It made me believe more watching these guys and Christ inside of them. I'm just going along for the ride," he said.

David James, ABSC college and young leaders team leader, spoke during the service.

"We believe that Arkansas Baptists together can do more than we can by ourselves. So we can reach the nations today. We reach the whole state today because of the money that you put in the plate today. Thank you so much for believing in the Cooperative Program," said James.

"Tavoris (Tee) Uzoigwe is a man of God. He is a man that came to know the Lord because of the Cooperative

Program," he added. "It is amazing how God in His sovereignty knows who needs to know Him. We are like light-houses to make a difference in the world."

James said that E4Call, the ABSC's summer internship program through which Garrett and Hill served this summer, attempts to help young men and women "walk worthy of their call," a reference to Ephesians 4.

"I know you guys (First Baptist) love God because you love people, no matter what the color, ethnicity or background. ... I know we live in a country where racism happens, but at the end of the day it (racism) is just not loving your neighbor as you love yourself. If it's not racism, it's just something else that is going to divide us anyway. So thank you for carrying out the Great Commission," said Uzoigwe.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.

ALCOHOL

continued from page one

planters would adamantly say that drunkenness is a sin and would see the biblical prohibition on alcohol not on consumption, but on drunkenness.

While societal attitudes may be shifting around the consumption of alcohol, ABSC leaders emphasized that the convention strictly prohibits the consumption of alcohol by church planters.

When Paul Hudson planted oneChurch in Conway about six years ago, he considered the biblical teachings regarding alcohol with his past family experience with alcoholism.

"Because this (alcohol) is an issue in our culture, we verbally and in writing ask our leadership not to drink alcohol," he said. Although Scripture does not clearly prohibit alcohol consumption, "The thing I know for a fact is if I don't drink, then I will never have a problem with getting drunk," he said.

Scripture has a "lot of parameters on how we are to live as God's people, and that would put a damper on our (alcohol) consumption. Caution is always the word of the day there," McClung agreed.

Living holy lives

Grigsby explained that equating a scriptural lack of prohibition to consume alcohol with a license to do so and to encourage others to do so "may be where a lot of people get out of step with what's

wise ... scriptural ... and holy because they take something that's not prohibited and say, 'Hey, let's do this.'"

Christ-followers are "often known more for what we're against than what we're for," said Hudson, adding, "I want to be known for what I'm for."

He believes Christians are called to holy living, which, he said is not "stopping something" but rather "a passionate chasing after God-likeness."

For Hudson the question about alcohol consumption becomes pragmatic: "What do I gain out of it? Does this help me be more God-like, or does this keep me from being more God-like?"

McClung agreed, "As a follower of Jesus, there are things that are going to help me in following Jesus or things that are going to not help me in following Jesus," drawing attention to 1 Corinthians 10:23, in which the Apostle Paul said that all things for a Christian are lawful but all things are profitable.

As Christians live holy lives, they become "light-bearers" for the gospel, Hudson believes,

quoting renowned theologian Charles Spurgeon who said, "In proportion that a church is holy, in that same proportion will its testimony for Christ be powerful."

However, there is also a danger in that Christians may "demonize" drinking alcohol

"so that if you have any kind of affiliation with it at all, then you're not holy or you're not Christian," said Grigsby, pointing out that many Christians around

the world – living in different cultural environments – may "meet at the pub for Bible study."

"To make some biblical arguments that the Bible says it (drinking alcohol) is dangerous so we should never do that – maybe that goes beyond the scope of Scripture," he said. "We're supposed to be as strong as Scripture, but I don't think

we're supposed to go beyond what Scripture teaches," as the Pharisees did in Jesus' day.

Christians "need to keep the lines drawn between what's biblical and what's culturally wise," he said.

If deciding if it is culturally wise to drink, a person can reflect on the question, "Is

it going to help me or not?" That's a good question to ask," said McClung.

Pastors and alcohol

There are myriad reasons why "avoiding alcohol for a pastor is a good idea," Grigsby said.

However, if a pastor does find himself struggling with alcohol, then churches should walk with their pastor through a "restorative process," he said.

"For years ... the church has been really long on pointing the finger and short on grace. I think the greatest way we can allow Jesus to be shown through us is by giving grace to people," said Hudson.

Yet, if a pastor or church leader is "unwilling or unable to make those kind of life changes, then it does not do him or the (church) body any good to leave him in a place of authority," he said.

ABSC offers free counseling services as well as other resources to pastors who are struggling with alcohol.

"We love our pastors, and Chad and I both would tell you that we're here for you," McClung said. If a pastor needs a safe place to talk, ABSC's "doors would be open, and we'll be that safe place and source of encouragement."

To listen to the 35-minute podcast, go to arkansasbaptist.org/abn-podcast.

Contact Margaret Colson at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.



McClung



Grigsby



Hudson



The Southern Baptist stance on the use of alcohol

Editor's Note: While the Baptist Faith and Message does not specifically state a position on Southern Baptists' beliefs concerning alcohol consumption, the topic has been addressed in numerous resolutions at the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting through the years.

The dangers of alcohol have been voiced nearly 60 times in resolutions adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention over the years, most recently in 2006 and 1991.

A lengthy debate marked the 2006 resolution. From the floor, an amendment to the Resolution Committee's ini-

tial text was proposed urging exclusion of Southern Baptists who drink from the convention's boards and committees. After back-and-forth debate, the amendment and the resolution passed by an estimated four-fifths vote, according to a Baptist Press report on the non-binding resolutions that year.

Among the resolution's declarations: "Years of research confirm biblical warnings that alcohol use leads to physical, mental, and emotional damage (e.g., Proverbs 23:29-35); "Alcohol use has led to countless injuries and deaths on

our nation's highways"; "The breakup of families and homes can be directly and indirectly attributed to alcohol use by ... members of a family."

The resolution's final "whereas" clause stated: "There are some religious leaders who are now advocating the consumption of alcoholic beverages based on a misinterpretation of the doctrine of 'our freedom in Christ.'"

In the key "resolved" clause, messengers embraced "total opposition to the manufacturing, advertising, distributing, and consuming of alcoholic beverages." –Baptist Press

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218 saved on FBC, Beebe, mission to Neb., Wyo.

Margaret Colson
Arkansas Baptist News

TERRYTOWN, Neb. – He told the visitors from Arkansas that doctors had only given him a year to live.

There, at a public park in Terrytown, Neb., Michael, as they later learned his name, revealed to them what appeared to be a tumor on his abdomen. Several of the Arkansans – mission volunteers from First Baptist Church in Beebe – shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with him as they hosted a block party at the park. Michael said he wasn't ready to make a decision.

Later, Bob Hall, pastor of the Beebe church, preached the good news to the crowd. As the pastor was saying, "If anyone here would like to invite Jesus into your heart ..." he heard audible cries and then a shout coming from Michael, "Would someone please show me how right now?"

One of the Arkansas vol-

unteers led Michael to make a profession of faith. Michael, along with 82 other people, "prayed to receive Jesus that night," said Hall.

This summer, on the church's third annual mission trip to Terrytown, Neb., which also included one evening in Torrington, Wyo., 218 people made professions of faith.

"God is definitely on the move in western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming," said Hall.

While on a mission trip with Calvary Baptist Association to Scottsbluff, Neb., in 2013, the pastor was first introduced to Terrytown, a town of about 1,600 with no church.

"As I was going door-to-door in evangelistic visitation, God spoke to my heart about Beebe First Baptist Church starting a church there," said Hall.

Returning home, he asked his church to pray. "After about three months, our church voted to take this on as a mission opportunity."

In 2014, the church's first

mission trip to Terrytown, volunteers led vacation Bible school (VBS) in the mornings and held three block parties in the evening.

During the block parties, attendees registered for door prizes. When registering, they were asked to take a short survey, with the final question asking if they had ever professed faith in Jesus Christ. If not, counselors were available to share the gospel message. Also during the block party, volunteers circulated through the crowds to "visit with people and witness to people," said C.W. Blood, a vocational evangelist and member of First Baptist, Beebe.

During the church's first mission trip to Terrytown, 52 people made professions of faith.

In 2015, First Baptist re-

turned to Terrytown for a second year of VBS and block parties. That year, 96 people made professions of faith.

"Volunteers went back to Terrytown this summer, and



God expanded our mission," said Hall. The 31-member team worked with Beautiful Temple Baptist Church, a Spanish-speaking congregation

less than a year old in Scottsbluff, Neb., leading VBS, hosting a block party and also offering a mini Celebrate Recovery training session.

While there, volunteers discovered that Beautiful Temple Baptist Church had "a vision to start a church in Torrington, Wyoming," said Hall. So, one evening during the week, the Arkansas Baptists traveled to Wyoming to host a block party. Thirty-four people made professions of faith at

the block party.

After meeting a church planter in Wyoming and also learning that a missions-minded church there wants to plant a church, Hall said, "I will not be surprised if there is not a church started there by the end of this year." A building has already been donated for the church plant.

Such experiences invigorate Blood and the other volunteers involved. In a Facebook post on his way home from Nebraska this year, Blood wrote: "As I sit on the bus traveling back, I can't help but think about the 218 souls saved. I think about the eternities and lives changed."

He wrote that it's time for churches to stop saying that non-Christians should come to them but rather say, "We are the church; we are coming to you." What if we went out every day and made every day of life a mission trip?"

Contact Margaret Colson at margaret@arkansasbaptist.org.

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JoyWorks and PraiseWorks camps change lives

Micah Overstreet
Arkansas Baptist News

ARKADELPHIA – The joyful commotion of worship could be heard echoing through the hills and ravines of Arkadelphia as the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) hosted two worship camps, JoyWorks and PraiseWorks, at Ouachita Baptist University (OBU), July 18-22.

With 728 students in attendance, a total of 10 professions of faith, 61 rededications and 40 decisions by those sensing a call to vocational ministry were made by week's end.

"I've been coming to this camp for probably 25 years, and I love it," smiled Pastor Butch Riddle of First Baptist Church, Ashdown. "I see the difference it makes! All three of our sons are music ministers because they came to JoyWorks and PraiseWorks. It's affected our family, and so I want to see it affect another generation of families and young people."

During JoyWorks, for students who had completed 4th – 6th grade, participants enjoyed choir as well as a myriad

of other activities, or "tracks," that ranged from drama to bucket drumming. This summer, organizers also added guitar lessons to the list of options.

"This year we added guitar and it was so cool. Every child in the camp got an opportunity to hold a guitar and play and learn some basic chords," said Larry Grayson, director of both camps. "It was awesome to plant that seed of passion in them and watch them realize, 'I can do this! I can learn this!'"

At PraiseWorks, for students who had completed 7th – 12th grade, students could choose two tracks to accompany the base requirement of choir or orchestra. Tracks offered included drum lessons, graphic design, improv classes, stomp dancing and more.

PraiseWorks students also tried out for a spot on the praise and worship team the first day of camp. Those who qualified led opening worship for the camp every morning for the rest of the week.

Annual mission projects helped round out the week. This year, JoyWorks students collected specific items along



728 elementary to high school-aged students participated in JoyWorks and PraiseWorks worship camps. The camps are hosted by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention and held on the campus of Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

with Wal-Mart gift cards for the children of the Monticello Arkansas Baptist Children's Home and the Boys Ranch in Harrison. PraiseWorks campers gathered school supplies – putting together more than 150 back-to-school packets – for church planting teams to

distribute at block parties.

"It's the week that I probably look forward to most in the whole year. Just seeing and hearing from the churches about the lives that

are changed as a result of this camp is the best part," said Grayson.

Micah Overstreet served as a summer intern for the Arkansas Baptist News.

MESSIAH

continued from page one

sent a trainer to their church in Little Rock two months before the trip to train the college students how to evangelize Jews.

"American college students have a huge impact in Israel because they're American and they're young," Winkler said. "Everyone who works for Jews for Jesus is Jewish; so for Gentiles to tell about Jesus, it either offends them (if they're Orthodox) or intrigues them (if they're secular Jews)."

Jalen Garmon, a graduate student at University of Arkansas at Monticello, described the group's first day at Ariel University.

"There is real spiritual warfare out there," he said.

"I felt like they had hard hearts. They'd turn their nose up at us and not want to talk to us."

Tuesday through Thursday

that same week, they made better progress standing at the entrance of two other universities surveying students, offering to send a New Testament, a book that is not sold in that country.

One self-described practicing Jew looked modern; in her colorful shirt, skirt, denim jacket and sunglasses, she might have passed for a student in the states.

"She was very polite," Garmon said.

"She told me that in Judaism ... they don't question what the rabbi is saying." When he asked if she had ever read the book of Daniel chapter 9, she told him she had never heard of it. Garmon directed her to read Deuteronomy 18:15 (NIV): "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet ... from your fellow Israelites."

Thomas Guinee, a sophomore at the University of Central Arkansas, described a similar experience.

"They don't have God's Word, just the teachings of the

rabbis," he said.

"The traditions are pounded into them, and some are motivated out of fear. If they choose Jesus, they lose their community."

The trip opened Guinee's eyes to the Jewish faith and gave him compassion for people of other faiths. He said God gets our attention in many ways. "For me, this trip was one of those ways."

Results from the campaign included: distributing more than 28,000 gospel pamphlets, speaking on the phone with 3,600 Jewish people interested in learning about Christ, gaining 405 contacts of those interested in following up, and seeing 43 Jewish people come to faith in Christ, Winkler said.

Jews for Jesus will follow up on contacts and disciple the converted.

Lisa Falknor writes for the ABSC college and young leaders team and is the northwest correspondent for the Arkansas Baptist News.

Master'Singers scholarship goes to Ouachita freshman

LITTLE ROCK – Shirley Chidester, an incoming freshman studying worship arts at Ouachita Baptist University, is the recipient of the 2016 Master'Singers Memorial Scholarship.

Chidester leads worship in her youth group and participates in youth ensemble and adult choir at her home church, Elmdale Baptist Church

in Springdale.

The Master'Singers Memorial Scholarship is awarded annually and designed to support a student who is preparing for some type of vocational music ministry. Funds for the scholarship are received in the form of memorial gifts and freewill offerings at concerts presented by the Master'Singers through the year.

URBAN

continued from page one

began using drugs, bringing much instability to the family for about a year. He and his brother found their escape in basketball. This year he led a basketball camp for UrbanPromise participants.

In addition to street leaders, Walker also invited college students from across the country to lead various classes offered by UrbanPromise. Staffers taught classes in arts and crafts, recreation, Bible/drama and school curriculum specified for each age group.

Street leaders shepherded their students to each class throughout the day. At each day's end, staffers, leaders and students gathered for a "hype it up" session that included prayer, music, games and fun – all intended to help campers understand the Bible in a memorable way.

An integral aspect of Urban-

Promise is allowing the positivity of the camp to outweigh the negativity of the world around the campers.

"UrbanPromise is great for this neighborhood because it needs that positive influence. The kids need that positive option to hold in contrast to what their society and other neighborhood kids tell them

person is valuable to God and that He desires a personal relationship with each one. It is our prayer and goal to make disciples that will shine the light and truth of Jesus Christ into their neighborhoods. Our mission is to provide spiritual, academic and social support to under-resourced areas."

UrbanPromise Arkansas will host an afterschool program throughout the school year. Volunteers are needed but must first complete and submit a background check and be at least 16 years old unless accompanied by an adult.

"These kids are quick to see how they can achieve growth from any circumstance, and they've taught me a lot about what it means to be a follower and to serve others in the way that Jesus has called us to," said Walker.

For more information about UrbanPromise and how to get involved, visit their website at urbanpromisearkansas.org.



An UrbanPromise volunteer works with children from the Baring Cross community. Photo by Micah Overstreet

is OK as things that are gratifying to the flesh," said Jessica Kim, 22-year-old UrbanPromise staffer from Virginia. "I think it's a great alternative."

Walker said, "The vision of UrbanPromise is to be a community in Christ of servant leadership and transformation. We believe that every

Deadline Nov. 4

Baptist Businessperson of Year nominations being accepted

LITTLE ROCK – Do you know a Southern Baptist businessman or businesswoman who is making a huge impact for Jesus Christ through his or her marketplace influence?

The *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) is planning to hold its Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year recognition, and ABN readers are invited to nominate a businessman or businesswoman for consideration.

"The ABN wants to bring attention to Arkansas Baptists who are making a difference for Christ in the lives of others and through their businesses and in the marketplace," said Tim Yarbrough, ABN editor/executive director.

Candidates should be a resident of Arkansas and a member of an Arkansas Baptist church. They should be actively involved in ministry

in their church and in other areas.

To nominate someone, please include the following: (1) name, phone number, email and church membership of the submitter; (2) name, phone number, email and church membership of the candidate, and (3) a 200-300 word essay explaining why the candidate should be considered for Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year, including the impact he or she makes in the business world, as well as his or her involvement in church/ministries/missions.

Submissions for the contest must be received on or before Nov. 4.

Email nominations to tim@arkansasbaptist.org or mail to Arkansas Baptist Businessperson of the Year, ABN, 10 Remington Drive, Little Rock, AR 72204.

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Church life

North Pulaski Baptist Association (NPBA) will sponsor Mission North Pulaski, a one-day mission trip, from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 10.

The event will cover multiple mission locations in Jacksonville and surrounding areas. The kick-off site is Second Baptist Church, 1117 North James Street, in Jacksonville. Registration deadline is August 31.

For more information, contact the NPBA office at (501) 812-6999 or email vicky@northpulaskibaptist.org.

Second Baptist Church, West Helena, will host “As for Me and My House,” a family enrichment conference, from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Saturday, August 27, sponsored by Arkansas Valley Baptist Association. Kelly Jones, pastor of First Baptist Church, Harrisburg, will lead the conference, along with other conference leaders from across the state and

Tennessee. Register at harrisburgfbc.com.

A launch event at **Mercy Tree Cowboy Fellowship in Atkins** will be held Sept. 18. The all-day event will include biscuits and gravy at 8 a.m., followed by worship at 9 a.m. and lunch at 11 a.m. A block party will be held in the afternoon.

First Baptist Church, Hoxie, in cooperation with Hope Missions of Jasper, Ala., recently completed a five-day mission trip to Alabama during the week of June 27 through July 1.

The mission team was composed of nine members from three different churches: four members of First Baptist in Hoxie; two members from North Union Baptist Church in Union City, Tenn., and three members from Silver Run Baptist Church in Seal, Ala.

The mission of the team was to paint the fellowship hall of Grace Baptist Church in Sumiton, Ala. “But our



BIBLES AND BLOCK PARTY — Adults and teens from First Baptist Church, Parkin, and the Parkin community, along with Beck Spur Baptist Church in Forrest City, recently distributed school supplies and Bibles to 100 children living in the Delta. School supplies were provided by First Baptist Church and the Parkin community as well as the North American Mission Board River Missions. Each child received a Bible with his or her name on it and the plan of salvation was shared with each one. A block party was also held.

greater mission was the hope supplied through obedient followers of Jesus willing to serve in whatever capacity for the advancement of the gospel,” according to organizers. A worship service was held each evening. Shawn Doss, director of

Hope Missions, brought four messages during the time the mission team was there in a series titled *Illuminate*.

Other activities included a share time at an apartment complex and a devotional held at a local restaurant.

On the move

J. W. Dobbins is serving as pastor of Eden Baptist Church in Hamburg.

Craig Golden is serving as pastor of Bee Branch Baptist Church in Bee Branch.

Terry Greenwood is serving as pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in Hamburg.

Jamie Little is serving as pastor of Martinville Baptist Church in Hamburg.

Alex Van Herpen is serving on staff at First Baptist Church in Walnut Ridge as children's minister.

Adam Shelburne is serving on staff at Highland Drive Baptist Church in Jonesboro as children's pastor.



Shelburne

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Classifieds

PASTOR

FBC Bellefonte is searching for a **bi-vocational pastor**. We are a fundamental, conservative, traditional worship rural church in the Ozarks. Send resume to jpslinger@icloud.com.

First Baptist Church, located in downtown Tallahassee, Florida, is seeking God's guidance for a **full-time senior pastor**. We are a Bible-focused congregation that desires a dynamic preacher/teacher who can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, possesses a deep and personal prayer life, has a strong focus on evangelism and can pastor a diverse congregation. Candidates should have a minimum of a masters of divinity and a doctorate is preferred. For more information on our church, please refer to www.fbctlh.org/pastorsearch. Interested candidates or referrals should submit a cover letter and resume to pastorsearch@fbctlh.org or to the Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 710, Tallahassee, FL, 32302. Review of resumes and cover letters will begin September 2, 2016.

Portland Baptist Church, Portland, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send letter/resume to Emory Austin, 779 Montrose, AR 71658 or e-mail to jimmiesadler@att.net. ATTN: Pastor Search Committee.

FBC accepting applications **full-time pastor**. Letter/resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 789, Marshall, AR 72650 email: mfbcoffice@gmail.com.

Grace Baptist Church in Belleville, Arkansas, is currently seeking a **bi-vocational**

pastor. Generous salary, 3 bedroom, updated parsonage available. Growing church with an average attendance of 70-85. Resumes accepted until 8-20-16, and can be mailed to P.O. Box 27, Belleville, AR, 72824.

FBC Lowell, AR, average attendance of 400-500, is seeking candidates for **senior pastor**. We are seeking an experienced leader with a heart and passion for discipleship and the desire to minister and love as Christ loves us in our growing community and beyond in northwest Arkansas. Candidates are responsible for the functioning, leadership and vision of the church. He is also responsible for the spiritual instruction and strategic leadership of the congregation, staff and ministries of the church. He must proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, be doctrinally sound, engage in pastoral care and community outreach, and provide leadership in all other areas of the church. Send resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 246, Lowell, AR 72745 or email them to fbc@fbc-lowell.com.

Shilo Baptist Church (SBC), Rover, Mo., 17 miles east of West Plains, seeking **bi-vocational pastor**. Worship attendance about 70, median age about 35. Send resumes to: Lyndell Huddleston, HC 61, West Plains, MO 65775.

First Baptist Church, Gillham, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Vona McKinley, 332 Pendergrass Road, Horatio, AR 71842.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Bald Knob Central Baptist Church needing **part-time music minister**. All inquiries and resumes are to be addressed to jamiem@weaverbailey.com.

Beebe First Baptist Church is accepting resumes for a **full-time minister of music and education**. Please send resume to PO Box 67, Beebe, AR 72012 or email bhall@fbcbeebe.com.

First Baptist Searcy is seeking a **full-time minister of music/worship**. Experience, a bachelor's degree in a music-related field and seminary training are preferred. Email resumes to linda@fbcsearcy.org or mail to FBC Searcy, Attention: Linda Stake, 105 S. Spring St, Searcy, AR 72143.

Elliott Baptist Church, 4189 Hwy. 376 South, Camden, AR, is seeking a **part-time worship leader**, to lead our congregation in blended music services. Resumes can be mailed to address above with attention: Search Committee or emailed to elliottbaptist@gmail.com. You can also visit our Facebook page for more info about our church or phone 870-231-6411.

East Main, El Dorado, is seeking a **part-time student pastor** to shepherd and disciple a growing, ethnically diverse youth group. Contact bthomas.embc@sbcbglobal.net.

Cane Creek Stoddard Baptist Association seeks an individual for the **Baptist Student Union position**. For details and resume submission: www.ccsba.com (BSU Director's Job Posting).

Cocklebur Baptist in Ward is seeking a bi-vocational church **worship leader**. Applicants would need to be available for Sunday and Wednesday evening worship services. Please submit resume to cbc4138@gmail.com.

Geyer Springs First Baptist is accepting resumes for **children's minister**. Email resumes or suggested candidate information to Curtis Barnes, cbarnes@gsfbc.org. Minimum 5 years experience in a church with 700+ attending.

Covenant Baptist Church, a traditional Southern Baptist church in Collierville, TN, seeks a **full-time minister of music/senior adults**. Send a cover letter and resume, along with a link to a video or DVD of a recent worship service which you have led, to Personnel Committee, Covenant Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1165, Collierville, TN 38027-1165, or to drsam@mycbcc.org.

Worship Leader – First Baptist Church Dardanelle is seeking a **part-time worship leader or full-time worship leader** with other ministry duties. For more information, call 479-229-3727 or email fbcddardanelle@gmail.com.

Small church needs **music director**. Sundays only. Contact sulliglenda@yahoo.com if interested.

First Baptist Church of Bay, Arkansas (just outside of Jonesboro) is seeking a **part-time associate pastor of music and worship** to lead our growing congregation. Resumes can be mailed to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 190, Bay, AR 72411

or emailed to fbcbay@suddenlink.net. You can also visit our website at www.bayfbc.org for more info about our church.

Sugarloaf Baptist Church in Heber Springs is currently accepting resumes for position of **full-time student minister**. Person will be responsible for students 7th-12th grade. Send resumes to: sugarloafbapt@gmail.com or mail: Attn: Youth Search Sugarloaf Baptist Church, 699 Wilburn Road, Heber Springs, AR, 72543. Call Tony Criswell at 501-362-2448.

Praying for a **part-time youth minister**! Send resumes to South Main Baptist Church, PO Box 430, Crossett, AR 71635; or email at SMBCSecretary@windstream.net. Visit our website at southmainbaptist.net.

Soaring Wings Christian Home and Ranch seeks a Christian couple as **full-time house parents** to provide long-term care for seven to 10 children, including own, in a Christ-centered home. For more information, email jason@soaringwing-ranch.com or visit www.swranch.org.

Southern Heights Baptist Church, Berryville, is seeking a **full-time worship leader**. Please send resumes to Personnel Committee, 279 Highway 221 S., Berryville, AR 72616 or shbc@shbc.arcoxmail.com. Website: http://www.myshbc.net.

Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church is seeking a **full-time student pastor**. Those interested should send a resume to Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church, Attn: Senior Pastor, 179 Devito Loop, Harrison, AR 72601.



■ **Houseparents needed:**
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at (870) 367-5358 or
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Pastor Reece marks 50 years of ministry

FAIRFIELD BAY – As a young high-school graduate, Ken Reece thought about his future.

On one occasion, while pondering his future, a question filled his mind, “Why not be a preacher?” Reece felt he wasn’t a good speaker and didn’t know the Bible. He thought this idea was impossible, but he sensed God assuring him, “I will provide.”

He responded to this divine calling on his life, and 50 years later he’s still preaching.

On Sunday, July 31, Fairfield Bay Baptist Church, Reece’s wife, Pat, family and friends helped Reece celebrate 50 years of service. During a worship service that morning, Reece’s son, Billy, pastor of Formosa Baptist Church in Clinton, preached in his father’s place.

Immediately following the service, those in attendance enjoyed a potluck dinner and a concert showcasing the talents of friends in Reece’s life. Sounds of Praise – featuring Bob and Wilba Thompson, Cindy Wellenberger and Doyle Scroggins, Jeff and Wendy Stotts, Brenda Weaver Wheelus and Gary and Norma Powell – performed. Stotts is former music minister at First Baptist, Mayflower, and Powell is the current associate pastor at Fairfield Bay Baptist Church.

Reflecting on his many years of ministry, Reece said the first sermon he preached was about the little boy who shared his lunch with Jesus, and in turn, Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 people. The premise of the story is that although the little boy didn’t have much to share, he was willing and able to give what he had to Jesus. The ser-



Ken Reece and his wife, Pat, with cakes presented by members of Fairfield Bay Baptist Church marking his 50 years in ministry July 31.

mon correlates with the basis of his ministry, Reece believes, as he didn’t think that he had much to give but gladly gave all he had to God.

Reece earned a master’s degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and has

pastored six churches: First Baptist Church, Adona; a church in Cason, Texas; Lee Chapel Baptist Church, Hot Springs; First Baptist Church, Ola, and First Baptist Church, Mayflower. In 2008, Reece and his wife moved to Fairfield Bay to pastor Fairfield Bay Baptist.

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Poinsett Co. churches gather for ‘unity day’

MARKED TREE – Seventeen churches from across Poinsett County gathered at First Baptist Church, Marked Tree, on July 24 for a unity day rally dedicated to showing thanks to local law enforcement and seeking unity in Jesus Christ, KAIT-TV reported.



Noe

Members sang and worshiped together during the event.

Rick Kimery, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church, told KAIT he hopes this sparks a flame of revival in the community.

“We have a wonderful community here in Marked Tree, and we are just looking forward to breaking down any barriers,” Kimery told the TV station. “We have a close-knit community, but we believe this is going to bring us together all the more.”

Dale Noe, pastor of First Baptist Church, Marked Tree,

gave all credit to Jesus Christ for bringing the groups together.

“The credit goes to Jesus Christ,” Noe told KAIT. “It’s just the fact that so many people can gather together from this area in one place to celebrate our unity and not our divisions.”

A number

of police departments, the Poinsett County Sheriff’s Department, fire officials and numerous church mem-

Howell named WBC campus ministry director

WALNUT RIDGE – Hayes Howell has been named the new director of campus ministries at Williams Baptist College (WBC).

Howell previously served as student and discipleship pastor at the Journey Campus of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro.

He replaces Josh McCarty as director of campus ministries. McCarty and his family moved to Grand Junction, Colo., where they are working as church planters.

Howell earned his bachelor’s degree in biology from Arkansas State University (ASU) before earning a master’s degree in business ad-

ministrations, also from ASU, and a second master’s degree in theology from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

While Howell has spent time in the supply chain management field, he said he started to feel God’s call into full-time vocational ministry, with a strong pull toward college students.

Organizers hope to make the unity rally an annual event.



Howell

“My wife (Elizabeth) and I are so excited to hit the ground running,” said Howell. “We love connecting with and encouraging college students.”

Howell is a Jonesboro native and the son of Kathy and the late Dickie Howell. He and his wife have two daughters.

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Faith & Culture

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Romans 12:2 (ESV)

Americans prefer talking politics vs. God

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Politics trumps God for most Americans when it comes to conversations with their friends.

Six in 10 Americans are more comfortable talking about politics than their spiritual beliefs. And most say they aren't interested in having more spiritual conversations.

By contrast, evangelical Christians prefer talking about God over politics by

a 2-to-1 margin.

Those are among the findings of an online survey of 1,004 Americans about their views on spirituality and politics from Nashville-based LifeWay Research.

"People tend to discuss the things that matter most to them," said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research. "For evangelicals, that is their faith."

As part of the survey, researchers compared how often Americans talk to others about politics to the number of times they talk about spirituality.

Two-thirds of Americans (64 percent) say they had at least three conversations about politics in the last month. Eight percent had no conversations about politics.

By contrast, fewer than half (44 percent) had three or more spiritual conversations in the same time frame. Twenty-two percent had no conversations about spirituality.

Overall, 6 in 10 Americans (59 percent) say they're more comfortable

discussing their political views than their spiritual beliefs. But there are distinctions among certain groups.

Women (51 percent), those who go to church at least once a week (57 percent), and those with evangelical beliefs (63 percent) prefer to talk about their spiritual views. Men (69 percent) and those who don't have evangelical beliefs (65 percent) prefer to talk about politics.

Most Americans also say they have about as many conversations about spirituality as they can handle.

About half (51 percent) say they have "just the right

amount" of discussions on spiritual beliefs. A quarter (23 percent) want fewer spiritual discussions. Only 1 in 5 wants more. Six percent aren't sure.

Hispanics (38 percent), those 18 to 35 (35 percent), and those who live in the West

people think about faith. About half (52 percent) believe they have as much to find out as they do to share during a spiritual conversation. A quarter (26 percent) say they have more to find out. A similar number (22 percent) think they have more to share.

Evangelicals are more likely to believe they have more to share (32 percent) in a spiritual conversation. They're less likely to say they have more to find out (17 percent). Frequent churchgoers also believe they have more to share (33 percent).

Those findings don't surprise McConnell. Sharing one's faith in order to convert others is a core evangelical conviction.

Still, he said, those with evangelical beliefs may need to listen more during a spiritual conversation.

"If you don't care what your neighbors believe, chances are they won't listen to what you have to say," he said.

Philip Nation agrees. Nation helps manage Bible Studies for Life, which sponsored the survey.

Evangelicals who want to share their faith may need to listen first, he said.

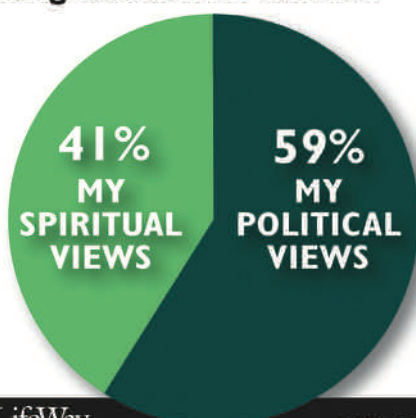
"The culture wants dialogue about spiritual beliefs," said Nation, director of content development for LifeWay Christian Resources. "Evangelicals too often only want to lecture our neighbors. We need to learn the needs and worldview of our neighbors so we can effectively discuss the gospel."

Overall, McConnell believes Americans are open to talking about faith. Few seem turned off by spiritual conversations, he said, especially if those conversations are in person and are respectful.

"If your friends are tired of arguing about politics on Facebook, trying asking them about God," he said.

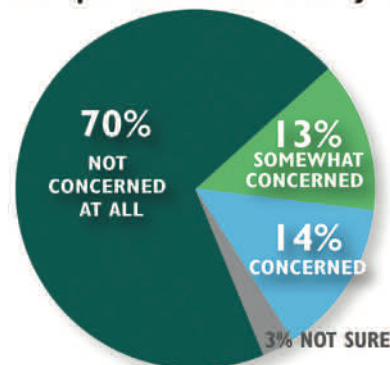
Among Americans:

Which are you more comfortable talking about with others?



Among Americans:

How concerned are you about people in your neighborhood who have different spiritual beliefs than you?



(30 percent) are more likely to say they have spiritual conversations "more often than I would like."

Those with evangelical beliefs (32 percent), those 55 and over (26 percent), and those in the South (24 percent) are more likely to say they have such conversations "less often than I would like."

Churchgoers are split. Three in 10 (29 percent) of those who attend at least once a week say they want fewer spiritual conversations. One in 4 (26 percent) wants more spiritual conversations.

Still, many Americans are open to hearing what other

The Watercooler

"I suspect that many of these supposed evangelicals in the polls have no clear understanding of the formal definition of 'evangelical,' which calls for true conversion and a devout life. ... They figure, 'I'm conservative (another ill-defined term) and a Protestant, therefore I am an evangelical.' Or maybe they think, 'Well, I watch Fox News, so I must be an evangelical.' Or, 'I respect religion, and I vote Republican, so I must be an evangelical.'"

– Thomas Kidd, Baylor professor

IN A RECENT article posted on christianpost.com, Christian Post writer Samuel Smith highlights statements by Thomas Kidd, distinguished professor of history at Baylor University, in which he argues that the large evangelical support of Donald Trump signals that the very term "evangelical" has lost its meaning.

Smith cites Kidd's reasoning that the term lost its meaning as a result of (1) "evangelical" becoming synonymous with Protestant and "American" in the eyes of many Southerners and Midwesterners starting in the 19th and on into the 20th century, and (2) due to rising support by evangelicals of non-evangelical candidates who promised to fight for evangelical interests. "This tendency culminated in the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, who knew many evangelicals but who was not one himself. Reagan mastered the art of talking like evangelicals," Kidd said. "But when he got into office, actual progress on those issues was fairly meager."

"From then on, self-identifying white evangelicals have often been okay with candidates who learn evangelical lingo, and who promise good Supreme Court appointments, whatever the candidate's other positions and background," Kidd said. "This meant that the public could disassociate evangelicals from theology, or affinity with other evangelicals, and link them inextricably with GOP (Republican Party) politics."

Among other findings:

Americans are split over sharing spiritual beliefs on social media. While 38 percent are comfortable or very comfortable doing so, a similar number (36 percent) are either not comfortable or don't use social media.

Few Americans (17 percent) say they are most comfortable sharing their views on social media. Three-quarters would rather discuss their beliefs one-on-one (40 percent) or in a small group (33 percent). Six percent would prefer not to share their views.

Americans seem lukewarm about starting a spiritual conversation. Three in 10 say starting a conversation is interesting (30 percent), easy (29 percent) or natural (29 percent). Few say starting a conversation is scary (9 percent), boring (5 percent) or embarrassing (4 percent).

Most churchgoers (72 percent) say they have the right amount of training to help them share their faith.

About half of churchgoers (49 percent) say their church treats sharing the gospel as extremely urgent (24 percent) or urgent (25 percent).

Seven in 10 Americans say they are "not concerned at all" if their neighbors hold beliefs different from their own. Six in 10 (61 percent) say they aren't concerned if their family has different beliefs.

AUGUST 21, 2016

Have you ever wanted to take justice into your own hands? My three- and five-year-olds do this often. Instead of waiting for mom and dad to dole out justice and consequences, they, in their impatience, dole it out themselves, which usually includes harsh words, the throwing of a toy or the beginning of a shoving match. We can laugh at this situation and try to chalk it up to childish behaviors, but in reality, the desire to take justice into our own hands instead of waiting on the Lord to be Judge is a struggle we all can face.

David had a chance to take justice into his own hands, but he chose instead to wait upon the Lord's timing. Let's look back at the text. When David discovered that Saul was encamped nearby, he took an ally with him to the camp and discovered Saul and his army dead asleep (1 Sam. 26:4-5). David had the opportunity to destroy the man who had caused him to have to flee into the wilderness. Even Abishai, who had accompanied David

to the camp, offered to dispense of Saul because, in Abishai's mind, God had given David the opportunity to do so. But in that moment, David decided to rely on the plan that God had in place.

Even though he knew that plan included him, David, eventually being king, he knew it would not come to pass by usurping the authority lines God already had put in place.

When you look at 1 Samuel 26: 9-10, David understood that for the time being Saul was still on the throne and that in God's timing, God would dispense of Saul. David didn't try to make God's plan come to pass in his timing, but in God's timing. He wasn't willing to force what he wanted now for what was eventually going to come in God's timing with God's plan.

Friends, in this world that deserves God's judgment, let us look to the Lord to be judge and trust in His plan and eternal perspective over our own.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Respect

1 SAMUEL 26:7-12, 21-25 (ESV)

Caroline Penick
Fayetteville

I remember my first exposure to the prosperity gospel. The TV preacher was exhorting me to plant a seed of faith (i.e., send him some money to be used in his ministry) and that seed would create a root, ultimately resulting in fruit that would come back to me. The translation of his message was if I give money to him, I would receive more in return. I did not know then why I thought this sort of thinking was absurd, but I knew enough not to send him my money. I'm not saying all TV preachers don't deserve your financial gift.

There is something that does not seem right about it ... but what? Proverbs 11:25 (ESV), a popular verse for those claiming a prosperity gospel, seems to suggest the idea that the TV preacher was telling me: "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered." So, why is the TV preacher wrong?

First, the book of Proverbs is describing general wisdom for all people in all times.

These are not hard and fast promises from God; instead, the reader should understand them as "proverbial" wisdom from the Lord.

Second, the Scriptures are intended to make one righteous, not wealthy. Giving in Scripture is always a command given to God's people to demonstrate their commitment to God and to others. God's people are always commanded to give because of love for God, not to gain in wealth.

Giving should be a fundamental part of a Christian's life. Wisdom says that when you give to others, you will benefit from it. That is true. So, give generously with a heart of love for those in need. Where God has blessed you graciously, use those

resources to help others. However, do not use God like an investment broker.

A final thought, if the principle espoused by the TV preacher is always true, then why did he not give all of his money away and simply bring in the overflow to fund his ministry?

Just asking.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

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PROVERBS 11:23-29 (ESV)

Craig Seals
Arkadelphia

AUGUST 28, 2016

The Christian life is not one of sunshine and rainbows. Please don't misunderstand what I say; there is deep, lasting and eternal joy in a life following Jesus, but it isn't a life free of trouble. Even David, anointed and chosen by God to succeed Saul as king, saw many troubles and trials in his life.

Let's look back into the passage at one of these times for David. David and his men were returning to their families, and in my mind as they came closer to home they saw the smoke rising. Can you imagine the pit they must have felt in their stomachs? As they raced to the city, reality set in. Everything was burned; everything and everyone were gone. Imagine coming back to your home and witnessing something similar. Oh, the desperation and distress that must have set in. 1 Samuel 30:6 says the people were so distressed that they talked of stoning David.

Such moments of crisis, like the one in 1 Samuel 30, can be moments that define our walk with the Lord. It shows us

where and in Whom we will choose to find strength and comfort in moments that make us question the character of God. What did David do? As his men were "bitter in soul" (1 Sam. 30:6,

ESV) and as they mourned their loss, David, too, was distressed. Yet, instead of only mourning, he also looked to the Lord as his strength. He sought wise counsel from the priest Abiathar (1 Sam. 30:7-8) and then went out to do the Lord's will: to overtake and rescue what had been taken from him and his men (1 Sam. 30:9-10).

This passage and the actions of David can be applicable in our own lives. When the storms come and the waters rise, will you choose to be like David's men and only find

solace in your grief?

Or, will you instead be like David who, though utterly distressed, gave his distress to the Lord, sought wise counsel on what to do next and then acted upon what the Lord put in front of him to do?

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Victory

1 SAMUEL 30:6-8, 18-25 (ESV)

Caroline Penick
Fayetteville

"Love your enemy as yourself." What sounds like a simple command actually takes a great amount of courage and love to accomplish. The question Jesus answered came from a lawyer who was seeking to justify his lifestyle, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus' response was followed with an appropriate question, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" (Luke 10:25-26, ESV). The man amazingly responded correctly that people should love the Lord God and love their neighbor as themselves.

What he missed was the significance of the command. What he heard was treat others in such a way as you would expect them to treat you. Thus, the amount of love given is proportional to the relative closeness of the individual.

Jesus, however, understood the command to be completely different. He believed followers of God should love other people, regardless of relational proximity, in the same manner as they would treat themselves.

The application of this text is incred-

ibly difficult to live out and will not be executed without the power of the Holy Spirit equipping a believer to die to self. The application is described in the following story of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan was willing

to extend love to another human being without paying any attention to relationship or social proximity. In sum, he was willing to place himself in the

man's shoes. He empathized with the hurting man and asked himself, "What would I do for myself in this situation?" He reasoned that he would find shelter and food. He made sure he had a place to rest. The Samaritan did for the Jew what he would have done for himself, not what he would have expected the Jew to do for him.

As followers of Christ, we must realize that we are not called to treat people as they treat us. Nor are we called to treat others in the way we would want them to treat us. We are called to the much more difficult task of treating them as we would treat ourselves, with love that gets involved.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Love gets involved

LUKE 10:25-37 (ESV)

Craig Seals
Arkadelphia

Olympics: Swimmer wins gold, shares source of happiness

RIO DE JANEIRO (BP) – Take a close look at Caeleb Dressel during some of his swimming competitions, and you'll notice a Scripture reference written across his face.

The reference changes with each event, and he hasn't yet worn the references at the Olympics, but a favorite one for the 19-year-old is Isaiah 40:31: "but those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles...."

That verse served as the inspiration for the large eagle tattoo on Dressel's left shoulder, and the Scripture references he wears are not just for him.

"It's the reason I'm in the sport, not just to go fast times, but to inspire people and show them where I find my happiness with what God's given me," Dressel said in an interview last year after U.S. Nationals.

Dressel made his Olympic debut on Aug. 7 in stunning fashion, winning a gold medal as part of the U.S. men's 4x100-meter freestyle relay team. Swimming the first leg ahead of teammate Michael Phelps, Dressel turned in a personal-best time of 48.10, just .02 seconds behind the leader to keep the U.S. team close. Phelps then pulled the U.S. team ahead for good.

Dressel swims again on Aug. 9 in the qualifying heats of the men's 100-meter freestyle. He hopes to do well enough to advance to the finals on Wednesday.

Not bad for a guy who gave up the sport for nearly six months his senior year of high school because he simply wasn't enjoying it.

"Coming out of that I started swimming again and really just put all my trust in God and knowing that He's going to take care of everything for me, good or bad," said Dressel. "I really learned a lot, and I really learned to see the light at the end of the tunnel and trust what God is doing, whether it be a rough point in your life or a top pinnacle in your life. You've just got to take pauses and really trust what He's doing."

Dressel was raised in a Christian home, but since

moving away from Green Cove Springs, Fla., and attending the University of Florida, his faith has become more personal – because he knows his beliefs are coming solely from him and not just his parents. He attends church at Campus Church of Christ in Gainesville.

His absence from swimming in high school was a difficult time for him, and Dressel admits that he wrestled with some "mental demons" during that period and struggled in his walk with the Lord.

But eventually he returned, both to the pool and to his commitment to Christ.

"It's what I'm meant to do," Dressel said about swimming. "I found my passion for the sport. I really love the sport. You get to meet a whole bunch

of new people. You get to create new relationships. You get to share some of the best memories of your life with these people that I'm with.

"Swimming is my life and I wouldn't want it any other way," he continued. "This is what I'm supposed to be doing, and God gave me the talent and I'm going to do that for Him, myself and my family and all my friends."

With that newfound passion, Dressel excelled as a swimmer. He earned consecutive NCAA national championships in 2015 and 2016 in the 50-yard freestyle, and added another NCAA title in 2016 in the 100-yard freestyle. He earned his spot on the Olympic team by placing second in the 100-meter freestyle at the 2016 Olympic trials.

In addition to wearing Scripture references on his



Caeleb Dressel won a gold medal as part of the U.S. men's 4x100-meter freestyle relay team Aug. 7 (Photo not taken during competition). Photo courtesy of Bold Action Media

face, he often posts verses and references on Twitter. One tweet from several months ago seems especially relevant to the challenges and successes

Dressel has faced: "When you avail yourself of God's grace and power, your comeback is always greater than your setback."

'Thy will be done' is Olympic shooter's prayer

RIO DE JANEIRO (BP) – In Sarah Scherer's competitions, the slightest movement – even an errant breath – can be the difference between winning and losing.

It's understandable that such circumstances can cause times of nervousness and tension during a shooting competition. That's why the Olympic shooter a few months ago decided to start reciting the Lord's Prayer to herself when the pressure is on.

"I realized I do that in life," Scherer said. "I might as well do that when I'm competing. Being able to say a prayer that's a structured prayer is very comforting."

The 2016 Olympics are a return visit for Scherer, who competed in the women's 10-meter air rifle competition in London in 2012. This time, in addition to that event, she's also representing Team USA in the 50-meter rifle three position, in which competitors shoot at a target from kneeling, prone and standing positions.

When she's competing, Scherer has to summon every ounce of focus and concentration she can to be successful. And she has a time limit.

That's where the Lord's Prayer comes in – something she knows by heart and can recite quickly without losing mental focus.

"The words are still just as meaningful, and they're still

back in March 2015, requiring a second surgery. The way her competition schedule was arranged, Scherer thought she had no chance of making the 2016 Olympic team since she didn't have enough recovery

changed, and another event had been added that would give Scherer the minimum qualifications for the Olympics.

The timeline was tight, but it wasn't impossible. And sure enough, after recovering from her second surgery, Scherer rehabbed, trained and earned her second Olympic berth.

"God had an amazing plan this whole time," she said. "No matter what might happen, God is all powerful, and He can change crazy things to make things work out. So you have to trust His purposes."

Through that journey over the past year, Scherer said the Lord has challenged her to learn more about Him and about His faithfulness. As she prepares to compete in Rio, she's confident as an athlete. She's also confident that God will care for her, no matter the circumstances.

"I have goals of how hard I want to work and what type of score I'm expecting and challenging myself with," Scherer said. "But when it comes down to it, I'm going to trust the Lord in whatever happens as well, whether it's better or worse."



Sarah Scherer, an American sports shooter, shoots during a competition. Scherer is representing the United States in this year's Olympics in Brazil (Photo courtesy of USA Shooting).

prayerful," she said.

That prayer shows Scherer's reliance upon God, especially the words "thy Kingdom come, thy will be done." It's a phrase that Scherer has grown to appreciate over the past several months, especially when it looked like she was going to bid the sport farewell.

A back injury required surgery in September 2014. Though the surgery was successful, Scherer reinjured her

time to compete in the events necessary to earn her Olympic spot.

So Scherer began the process of retiring, which proved difficult emotionally.

"I had to trust that the Lord had a plan and bigger purpose for it," she said.

But just a couple of weeks before her second surgery, she got a call from her coach informing her that the World Cup schedule had been



Arkansas

BAPTISTS

Top story picked up
by Baptist Press
and state Baptist
newspapers

Photo by Caleb Yarbrough



Arkansas Baptists reach Seattle through Cooperative Program

Arkansas Baptists are making a difference in one of America's most unchurched areas because of their giving to cooperative missions through the Cooperative Program (CP). By continuing to give to their local churches ~ and the churches giving a portion of those gifts along with other Baptist churches' gifts to CP ~ church planters like Andy Brown from Camden, are able to establish long-term relationships and share the love of Christ with unbelievers in Seattle.

Landing believers

Kim Menon was a staunch, outspoken atheist. As a child, her parents took her to church, but no one could satisfy her with the answers she sought. "I thought believers just weren't

intelligent enough," Menon said.

Now as a kindergarten teacher in Seattle, Wash., education is a central part of Menon's life. She takes her job seriously, striving to get involved in her students' lives and get to know their parents. She believes that's how students best learn and grow. But Menon had no idea how this path would lead her straight into the arms of Jesus.

In 2013, Brown moved from Camden to Seattle to start planting churches through the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Brown's ministry is supported by the CP, Southern Baptists' unified plan to invest in state, national and global missions. All are funded by the percentage of tithes and offerings that local churches designate to cooperative missions through CP.

"Together we are able to hit places like Seattle because it's so expensive to live there," said Larry Bailey, missions pastor at Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro, a sponsor church for Brown's mission.

Brown's son was registered for kindergarten at the local school and placed in Menon's class. The school seemed to be in good shape, but the grounds needed landscaping and care. "A lot of the ministry we do is community service," Brown said. "A constant presence in the community is the best way to reach people, so we kind of adopted the school."

In Seattle, it is illegal to talk about religion on

See **COOPERATIVE** page 18

COOPERATIVE

continued from page 17

school campuses. So when Brown talked to the principal about his desire to help the school with community service, she was hesitant. Brown agreed to work with no mention of his religious beliefs. Everyone knew he was the pastor of The Landing Church, but there would be no pressure from Brown whatsoever while he was on campus. He was there only to serve.

Many of the teachers were curious why he would do all that work with nothing in return, so it piqued their interest. "He could answer my questions when asked," Menon said, "but that was it."

A need for help

"We have a small church, and most of the new believ-

ers are still not comfortable being bold with their faith in an area where it is still taboo," Brown said. "So we have to have a lot of outside help to have a constant presence in the community." For example, the church does almost all the landscaping for the school. In addition, they do some painting and cater a few times a year for the teachers and other special events.

That's why missions trips from sponsor churches like Central Baptist in Jonesboro are so important. Also essential is the support they receive through local churches giving to missions through the CP. The dollars given by the members of Arkansas Southern Baptist churches do more than just keep the electric bill paid, the investment touches lives like Menon's in Seattle.

Bailey was involved in one of those missions trips as a

volunteer in Menon's class. He asked to make copies, grade papers, help with projects – anything to be of service to her. "She was very suspicious," Bailey said. "She said, 'I don't get it. You fly all the way from Arkansas to Seattle to make copies for me. Why?'" He simply explained, "Because we want to love you and show you that God loves you, too." As they worked, Menon sat in the back of the classroom and watched with tears streaming down her face.

"I had never met anyone who did things like that without wanting something in return," Menon said. "I thought Christians were predators who didn't really care about who I was. They just wanted me to say a prayer and then not give a care about me."

The power of persistent love

For two-and-a-half years the

Brown family continued to minister to the school and to Menon, among others. They invited Menon to birthday parties, neighborhood get-togethers and holiday events. They never hid their faith. Quite the contrary – they continually invited her to church. It even became a joke, with Menon saying it would never happen. But as time went on, they all became very good friends, and Menon fell in love with this family.

At the same time, Menon's marriage was falling apart, and she wanted to save it. She knew the Browns were pro-marriage, so she came to them for help. Menon felt hurt, unloved and rejected by her husband, but the Browns showed her that they would love her no matter what. It made her wonder if there was something to all this talk about Jesus.

"I loved them at this point,

and I didn't want to come to church and get their hopes up and then disappoint them," Menon said. So she began to learn about God on her own. If she heard them mention a Christian book that they really liked, she would secretly buy the book and read it herself.

Miraculous healing

Then Menon's mother became very ill after a series of heart attacks. In spite of her fragile health, she was scheduled for heart surgery. Menon needed a miracle, so she did the only thing left to do: she called Brown and asked him to pray for her mother.

"I couldn't believe what I was hearing," Brown said. But what surprised him even more was what he heard come out of his own mouth: "God will heal your mother."

Brown panicked. What if God didn't heal her mother?

How your giving to **missions** is magnified and multiplied through the **Cooperative Program**



- Arkansas Missions
- Connecting Churches Directly to Missions
- ABSC Agencies
- Disaster Relief
- Church Planting
- International Missions
- North American Missions
- Theological Education
- Ethnic & Religious Liberty Ministries

What if this pushed her even further from God? So he did what he knew he should do – start praying. He called everyone in the church, emailed and posted on Facebook. He had every believer he knew praying for Menon's mother. "Prayer and fasting are first and foremost on Brown's mind," Bailey said. "Like the saints of old – he's patterned his life after them."

Everyone waited with expectation as Menon's mother underwent the surgeon's knife. But when the doctors opened her up, they could find nothing wrong with her.

Menon was relieved, but also frustrated and angry. She wanted an explanation, but none of the doctors could tell her how her mother could be healed. She called a friend, an atheistic cardiac nurse, and her only response was, "Sometimes we don't have the knowledge yet."

Menon called Brown, and when she questioned him, he simply said, "What do you think about it?" Menon searched her heart, and she knew Who healed her mother: God.

A softened heart

It wasn't long until Menon was ready for the "God talk." She was alone listening to Christian music, and a song

came on the radio that spoke to her. "I am not alone," she said, "Even though my husband leaves me and goes away, God will never leave me." She called the church, and Brown wasn't available, so she spoke with a woman there. "I feel something different inside me," Menon began to explain. At the end of the conversation, the woman led her in a salvation prayer over the phone.

Menon brought 19 of her unsaved friends to her baptism, and she is now the part-time children's minister at The Landing Church. "My life has changed immeasurably," Menon said. "I used to omit the words 'under God' from the pledge of allegiance. I was for gay rights, and now I have a different definition of marriage – God's definition. I didn't even know what a gospel tract was three years ago, and now I'm handing them out."

The Browns can continue to help Menon grow in her faith, and help her reach others, if Arkansas Baptists continue to support them financially through CP and come to Seattle to serve.

"Tell the people in Arkansas 'Thank you' and that they are changing lives," Menon said. "There's a teacher next door to me, and she's been burned by believers. They need to come



Pastor Andy Brown of The Landing Church in Seattle, Wash., baptizes former atheist Kim Menon at a recent service.

volunteer in her class. They can give their time and their prayers."

The costs of ministry

"We need a lot more support," Brown said. What The Landing's ministry is currently receiving in support just isn't enough to cover all of their expenses. "We have to raise a lot of money on our own because the cost of living is 45 to 50 percent higher than it is in other parts of the country."

With a growing ministry, the costs are also growing. The Pacific Northwestern United States is 96 percent unchurched, and the few churches that do exist make little or no effort to reach people in

their communities. In addition to Brown's church plant and his efforts to reach people through the school, he has also started a homeless ministry called SALT, which supplies food, clothing and personal health supplies, as well as biblical teaching. Through Brown's efforts, since March 2014, 48 people have come to Christ.

"Without the CP, Southern Baptist missionaries wouldn't have the base to operate," Bai-

ley said. "Together we can target strategic areas and accomplish a lot."

Imagine what men of prayer like Brown could do in the mission field if every family in Arkansas began simply to tithe each month to their local church. How much would they give to see more people like Menon find eternal life?

To watch Menon's video testimony, "Landing Believers," visit absc.org/cpshare.

LEAD >>> DEFEND

Conference for High School, Collegiates & Young Pros
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more info coming soon



CP Share – a new resource for Arkansas Baptist churches

Greg Addison
ABSC

WHILE MOST Christians understand that the Great Commission is a call for each of us, we all struggle with how to answer that call beyond the boundaries of our lives. Great news! It is much simpler than you may realize. Arkansas Baptists are answering Jesus' call to reach out "into all the world" every week when they give sacrificially to their church, which cooperates with other Arkansas Baptists through the Cooperative Program (CP).



Addison

The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) has created a new story format, CP Share, designed to help Arkansas Baptists gain an understanding of the tangible difference they are making through their church's CP participation. Consider for a moment the impact when a person begins to understand that every tithe check to their church connects them directly to a missionary or ministry alongside other Arkansas Baptists.

CP Share tells the stories of Arkansas Baptists who are making a world of difference in Arkansas, church planters reaching the nation's largest cities through the SBC's SEND city initiative, and International Mission Board missionaries with whom Arkansas churches are partnering to reach unreached peoples with the gospel. This growing collection of video and written testimonials is a brand new resource for churches to use in teaching how God is using us to share the gospel – together.

Each month we produce a new set of CP Share stories about an Arkansas Baptist involved in sharing the gospel, whether through a CP missionary or in CP mission projects, because of CP gifts from Ar-

kansas Baptist churches. Every CP Share edition includes a written testimony of sharing the gospel as well as a video version of that testimony. Two related stories further explain the impact of the mission work or provide tips for how your church can get involved. Each component of the edition is published on the ABSC website and all of our social media platforms so we can connect this information with all Arkansas Baptists.

CP Share always teaches that mission giving is best accomplished through your church and your church joining other Arkansas Baptist churches through CP. These stories are designed for pastors, missions committees and others who are casting the vision for missions in their church.

Please know these are being produced for you! Use them in any and every way you can imagine. Show the videos during your offertory. Share the links in your bulletin or through your church's social media. If you need help, copies of anything, or help in downloading the videos, please call our team.

The feature story in this edition of the *Arkansas Baptist News* is a CP Share story. The Arkansas pastor planting a church in the SEND city of Seattle is working not only with the SBC but also with mission teams from Arkansas Baptist churches. His story illustrates what happens when our church members catch the vision that they are directly involved in church planting, and they can see folks come to Christ by cooperating with others through CP.

We have great new leads for upcoming CP Share stories, but we definitely want to hear from your church as well. Tell us about your church's projects whether they are here in

Arkansas or around the world. Our goal is to tell the story of how Jesus is changing lives and to encourage all Arkansas Baptists to live out the Great Com-

mission by giving sacrificially to their church. In doing this, they can tangibly participate in the advance of the gospel. We want to tell the story of how

you, by giving through your church, are sharing Jesus "into all the world."

Greg Addison is associate executive director of the ABSC.

Attn: Pastor/Ministry Leader:

Educate your church on election issues

Help your church members cast *informed votes* on the ballot issues this November!

• There are three ballot issues that are almost certain to get a slot on November's ballot that we must confront. Two purport to legalize "medical" marijuana – but in reality will permit virtual recreational marijuana. The third ballot measure will establish casino gambling in Boone, Miller and Washington counties and bring with them all the well-known problems for families, the economy and communities associated with that predatory business.

• What are the issues and the implications for our state if the ballot measures are approved by voters? What are the biblically sound positions to take on ballot issues? How can our grass roots network best be informed, motivated and mobilized?

• The Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council will disseminate up-to-date information on those ballot issues. Also, AFEC will work



to facilitate, coordinate and execute the campaigns to defeat those measures at the ballot box.

• This includes an offer by AFEC to conduct church wide, multi-church, or town hall meetings to examine and explain the ballot issues and how each poses a threat to our state.



Larry Page

• Licensed Attorney
• Executive Director of the
Arkansas Faith & Ethics Council

Page is often available to come to a church, association, ministerial alliance, regional gathering or other venue to share information, answer questions and to provide guidance *at no charge to your church!*

Contact information for Larry Page:

501-837-1688 (office) • llp@ArFaith.org

If you have questions or need to request any of AFEC's services, want to inquire about an informational meeting, or would like to receive AFEC's email updates and alerts, call (501) 837-1688 or email llp@ArFaith.org



ABSC to host eib4Him Summit Sept. 29-30

THE MISSIONS team of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) will host the eib4Him Summit Sept. 29-30, at the Baptist building in Little Rock. The eib4Him Summit will provide Arkansas Baptist churches the unique opportunity to connect with International Mission Board missionaries who are taking the gospel to the people of East Indonesia and beyond (EIB).

EIB missionaries will teach churches how to come alongside them in their efforts to reach unreached people groups. They will also share

with attendees how to pray for our IMB missionaries. Pastors and church leaders will have the opportunity to investi-

gate all types of partnerships with this group, ranging from short-term trips to adopting an unreached people group.

There is also a special time planned for women with eib4Him missionary wives on Thursday, Sept. 29. This

Program we can."

Churches who attend the Summit and dialogue with EIB missionaries can see how their CP dollars are already at work, but also consider if God might be calling them to take that extra step of carrying the name of Jesus to these unreached people groups (UPGs) and unengaged, unreached people groups (UUPGs).

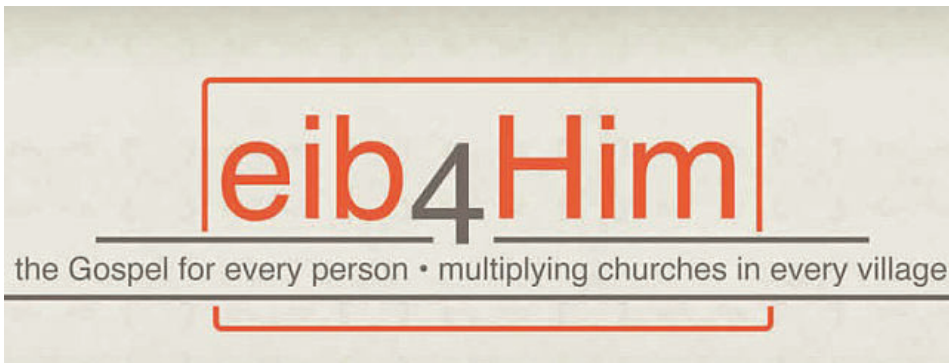
The EIB cluster has about 700 people groups. Of those groups, 76 are considered UUPGs, meaning they are less than two percent evangelical Christian and there are no known witnesses among them. Nine of these UUPGs technically report no known believers. Sixty-three groups are UPGs, which means they are less than two percent evangelical Christian but there are known efforts to teach the gospel. More than 300 of the remaining people groups have no known congregations, and they are counted as reached because more than two percent claim to be evangelical

women's session is a unique event, and women do not have to participate in the Summit to enjoy Thursday evening.

The ABSC-eib4Him partnership and the Summit event are both made possible by churches who give to cooperative missions through the Cooperative Program (CP).

"There are very few churches in Arkansas that could field the missionaries necessary to reach the unreached people groups and unengaged unreached people groups in the EIB cluster," said Bob Fielding, missions team strategist for the ABSC, "but through the Cooperative

See **EIB4HIM** page 25



Show a CP Share video to your church!

1. Visit absc.org/cpshare videos.
2. Find the video you would like to show.
3. Below the video, click "download the video" link.
4. The video will be saved as a file on your computer.
5. Put that file on the computer you use for your church services, or put it on a flash drive.
6. Import the file on your worship software (ProPresenter, EasyWorship, etc.)

Please call the ABSC communications team if you have questions.



eib4Him

the Gospel for every person • multiplying churches in every village

2016 EIB SUMMIT SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2016 ABSC BUILDING

Become equipped to help reach the unreached of the East Indonesia and Beyond (EIB) area. Together, we CAN reach those who have not heard!

- * Lead your church to become prayer partners with field personnel
- * Explore partnering with an existing ministry
- * Learn how to start a new network among the unengaged
- * Hear from IMB and ABSC personnel who are working within EIB

For more information and to register, visit

ABSC.ORG/EIB



●●●●● Register before August 31st to save \$10 with the Early Bird Rate!



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Church Safety Training

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Four locations!

September 12

Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith
9:30 am – 2 pm

First Baptist Church, Russellville
6 pm – 8 pm

September 13

Cross Church, Pinnacle Hills (Rogers)
9:30am – 2 pm

First Baptist Church, Harrison
6 pm – 8 pm

Registration Required (training and materials are free):

Register online at absc.org/ministrysafe or by phone at 800-838-2272, ext. 5222

For more information, contact Ben Phillips at 800-838-2272, ext. 5222, or bphillips@absc.org



3 testimonies of how CP fuels gospel in Arkansas

THE EXECUTIVE Board of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) is working with Arkansas Baptists to accomplish the Great Commission. This ministry happens through cooperation – Arkansas Baptists giving to cooperative missions through the Cooperative Program (CP) and by going on mission together to share the gospel.

Our efforts as ABSC cooperative missionaries are guided by three essential intents: strengthening churches, focusing evangelism partnerships on those who are unengaged, unreached and underserved with the gospel, and impacting students from kindergarten to graduate school.

Here are three examples of how your CP giving is fueling these gospel ministries.

1. Strengthening churches.

With seven recent baptisms, it is evident that God is using Harvey Hibner to revitalize Sulphur Springs Baptist in Pine Bluff. Hibner has served as Sulphur Springs' pastor for the last several months while also operating the StoneBridge mobile ministry center.

StoneBridge, Sulphur Springs' community outreach tool, distributes snow cones and popcorn in Pine Bluff. The ministry has brought new energy to the church and is the foundation for a possible church plant.

But Hibner and Sulphur Springs Baptist have not been alone in this ministry. Central Baptist Church in North Little Rock provided the trailer for StoneBridge, and the Harmony Association has supported Sulphur Springs financially and plans to be a partner if they plant the new church. Hibner has also participated in a church revitalization conference led by the ABSC church health team.

"Moving from an inward focus to a community focus is a vital component of church revitalization," said Marcus Brown, a member of the ABSC church health team. "Churches like Sulphur Springs demonstrate that selflessly reaching out into the community with the gospel positions them to see God move in exciting ways."

The church health team stands ready to assist any church that wants to see God

bring revitalization like He has at Sulphur Springs.

2. Focusing evangelism partnerships on those who are unengaged, unreached and underserved with the gospel.

After surviving five gunshot wounds in California, Anthony Banks returned to his hometown of West Helena. Once a gang member, Banks is now reaching the community for Christ.

Banks is the pastor of Second Baptist Church in Turrell, meeting in what used to be First Baptist Church. Now only a few months old, this church plant has breathed life back into the community.

"They started out with about seven people in the church," said Dave McClung, a member of the ABSC church planting team. "Now they're baptizing people just about every Sunday."

Churches like First Baptist, Rogers, and First Baptist, Lepanto, have supported Banks' ministry by helping with backyard Bible club and hosting a block party.

"The people of Turrell are watching their town, in shock, as Anthony is loving on them," said Chris Roller, youth pastor of FBC, Rogers. "He is making a huge impact, and he started with nothing but a building! But he does need finances and people to do some of the ground work."

3. Reaching the younger generations with the gospel.

On Sunday, July 24, college students Sannorris "Chump Chump" Garrett and Tra Hill were baptized at First Baptist Church, Gould. Both young men attend the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, where they accepted the Lord during a Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM) service last year. They were discipled and baptized by campus minister Tee Uzoigwe.

Uzoigwe himself was led to Christ because of a CP-funded ministry. Arkansas Baptists' CP giving allowed the Pulaski Baptist Association and North American Mission Board to start a church at Whispering Pines Mobile Home Park in Little Rock, and it was there that Uzoigwe met the Lord.

This summer, Garrett and Hill served as interns for FBC, Gould, through the E4Call

program of the ABSC missions team. Ministering alongside Pastor Larry Toller, Garrett and Hill have seen God bless their efforts to seek His

will and minister in Gould.

They opened the church's gym every day, allowing kids from the community to play basketball. Later they started a

basketball clinic, averaging 22 kids a day, so that they could teach the gospel. More

See **TESTIMONY** page 25



Acts 1:8

One Day Mission Trip

OCTOBER 1, 2016
FORT SMITH, AR

Join other Arkansas Baptists from across the state for the
2016 One Day Mission Trip
with the Concord Baptist Association
& ABSC churches in the Fort Smith area

Cost: \$10 per person

Registration and more information is available

at absc.org/oneday or contact:

Kathy Hensley | khensley@absc.org

Tracy Archibald | tarchibald@absc.org

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501-376-4791, ext. 5150

Missions
ARKANSAS BAPTISTS

A ministry funded by the generous gifts given by Arkansas Baptists through the Cooperative Program and the Great Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering

Arkansas
BAPTISTS

6 strategies for reaching millennials

COLLEGE ministers in Arkansas are seeing students' lives changed by the power of the gospel presented through Baptist collegiate ministries (BCM), a ministry supported by the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program (CP).

With unprecedented numbers of young people leaving the church in recent history, such success is invaluable to ministers of all ages. So for July's CP Share focusing on BCMs, several Arkansas BCM ministers shared their best advice on how to reach millennials. Check out all the resources of this package by visiting absco.org/cpshare.

Brad Branham, Arkansas Tech, Russellville, saw God bring revival to the campus of Lyon College in Batesville, going from one person at his church to reaching 10 percent of the campus in one year. Now, after being at Arkansas Tech for one year, he has seen God triple the size of the ministry, and they are preparing for more this fall.



Branham

"College students see through being cool or relevant. You could be the most uncool, untrendy guy ever, and you can reach people. Millennials have been 'sold to' their whole lives. They want authenticity. God is the One doing the work. You just have to give them the opportunity to respond and then follow up." Read and

watch more of Branham's story at absco.org/cpshare.

Tarvoris Uzoigwe, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB), has experienced an explosion of faith at UAPB among students, including one young man who



Uzoigwe

has led several of his friends to Christ and even put his life on the line to share the gospel with a drug dealer in his hometown.

"You must be authentic in your faith. Millennials can smell and see someone who is not genuine. Really open up your life to them by allowing them to see your

shortcomings as well as your strengths. Most things will be caught and not taught. Your effectiveness in reaching millennials will be only as powerful and effective as how much God has ahold of you. Do not be in public for Jesus what you are not in private for Jesus."

Lynn Loyd, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, has seen



Loyd

one Arkansas college student impact the nations when an international student from South Asia came to get a business degree and received Christ. He is now going back to his country as a missionary, even making contact with Interna-

tional Mission Board missionaries where he lives.

"Most students graduating today want to be their own bosses and go their own directions. They have very entrepreneurial mindsets. However, they have limited work experience and little understanding of management. Be-

come a mentor to a college student. Help them learn critical management skills in time management, personal life, financial and social areas of their lives. Help them find part-time jobs or internships in areas they are passionate about."

Jared Farley, Henderson State University, Arkadelphia, has seen how relationships can be an effective way to disciple college students. One student came to the BCM after months of working out at the gym with Farley, and the student's life was forever changed.

"The best piece of advice I can give is to invite [college students and millennials] into your life. College students need to see a great example of a Christian living his life for God in whatever area he is in. That can be stay-at-home mom, businessman, lawyer, teacher and many others. They need space to make mistakes and ask questions. Challenge them and love them equally.

Be available both for informal and formal times of spiritual growth/input in their lives."

Phillip Slaughter, University of Arkansas at Monticello, saw the workings of the Holy Spirit in a young man who had been a high school dropout. Through discipleship and spiritual growth, he is now leading others to Christ in a local church.

"Teach students the Bible not only by opening the book to them, but also by opening your life to them. Be an example and a mentor who allows students to watch you live your life for Christ (flaws and all). This is biblical. It is healthy for students to see us as imperfect humans who love Jesus and strive to be more like Him.

You might be the only Jesus-follower, loving spouse/parent or true friend they ever know."

Jerome Stockert, Arkansas State University, Jonesboro, has seen his students go



Farley



Slaughter

Reaching Arkansas through the CP

You are reaching the underserved and the younger generation in Arkansas with the gospel through the Cooperative Program!

Super Summer: 2,721 students attended Super Summer 2016, with 120 salvations and 80 ministry decisions.

Camp Siloam: More than 4,000 students registered for Camp Siloam this summer. There have been 265 campers to make salvation decisions during the first seven weeks of camp.

JoyWorks/PraiseWorks: A total of 728 participated in these two worship arts camps, 10 accepted Christ, 61 rededicated their lives and 40 heard God calling them into vocational ministry.

Community ministries: During the first half of 2016, volunteers working with various community ministries have led 397 persons to make professions of faith. Additionally, more than 200 babies were saved from abortion in crisis pregnancy ministries supported through the Cooperative Program.

deeper in their faith, especially one young woman who has openly blogged about her willingness to go and do whatever God calls her to do.

"You set the tone. Your attitude, your heart, your words affect others. In Joshua 14:8, Caleb speaks

about how some of the leaders made the hearts of the people melt. In doing so, the fulfillment of God's people entering the Prom-

ised Land was delayed. We must be like Joshua and Caleb and instill courage and love and not melt the hearts of the people. We set the tone."



Stockert

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Continuing the vision of the Cooperative Program

Rachel Gaddis
ABSC

WITH THE EASE of travel and technology that is constantly evolving, our world today is probably more interconnected than ever before. At the same time, we are updated minute-to-minute about how incredibly divided and broken we are – internationally, as a nation and in our communities.

At such a time as this, as believers looking at our personal worlds and the world at large, we know the One who is the answer to all the heartache of this world: Jesus Christ. And if we really believe this, then there is only one issue, one question to answer: “How do we take the gospel to those who need to hear?” This question is at the heart of Southern Baptists’ discussions today, but it is not a new question.

The environment at the 1925 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in Memphis was hot and steamy, and not just from the summer heat. Messengers were debating about delicate cultural issues, stewardship in a rough economy and a lack of funds. The SBC and its ministry programs were nearly bankrupt, and the Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) was forced to make huge budget cuts that eliminated its evangelism department.

In the midst of fear and uncertainty, the one thing Southern Baptists truly rallied around was the cause to further the gospel through missions. That year, Southern Baptists adopted the Cooperative Program (CP).

Just a few years before, the SBC had found itself \$34 million shy of reaching its goal in the “75 Million Campaign” of 1919. Perhaps a blessing in disguise, the seemingly unsuccessful campaign did several things. First, Southern Baptists collected more missions funds than the previous 75 years combined. Thousands of churches also made first-time contributions to national and international missions causes. But, even more importantly, churches began to consider how a uni-

fied giving plan could take the gospel to unreached people in a way that a single church could not.

So in 1925, a unified giving plan connecting Southern Baptist churches with a vision for missions is exactly what a committee proposed at the annual Convention. Following the presentation, messengers approved the plan, but with one recommendation: “That from the adoption of this report by the Convention our co-operative work be known as ‘The Co-operative Program of Southern Baptists.’”

Southern Baptists relied on coming together to save them and to take the name of Jesus to the world, and the CP was the result of that vision. Its implementation not only saved and revolutionized the SBC but also empowered the local church to reach the globe with the gospel like never before.

Less than 20 years later, God used the collaboration of churches to grow their influence and expand their resources. Because of the sacrificial giving of Southern Baptists during the Great Depression and World War II, the SBC was debt-free by 1943. Today, Southern Baptists are continuing to impact the world for Christ through the CP.

When Southern Baptists give to their church each week, a portion of every undesignated tithe or offering received becomes cooperative missions dollars through the CP. The combined CP dollars of collaborating churches then support gospel missionaries in each church’s state, throughout North America and the world. Currently, the North American Mission Board supports 5,653 missionaries (2015), and the International Mission Board supports 3,645 appointed field personnel (May 2016).

CP is not a campaign. It is a kingdom-building strategy to take the gospel to the nations. Austin Crouch, who served as the first president of the SBC’s Executive Committee from 1927 to 1949, said this a few years after CP was established:

“The Cooperative Program is scriptural in its objectives

and methods. The plan is, of course, through cooperation of individuals and churches.

Paul gave a fine example of cooperative effort. He had urged the churches in different sections to make contributions for the poor at Jerusalem, and the method for raising this money was according to his instruction to the church in Corinth: “Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as

God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (1 Cor. 16:2). The ap-

peal of Paul and the CP is to individuals.

Today, whether cultural or economic, are no different from 1925 because the answer is still the same: Jesus! The most important calling of every believer is to continue the Great Commission.

This is the heart of the CP, and it’s the strategy of Southern Baptists to take the gospel to the nations. God’s power is visible when we come together, and together we can do more.

Rachel Gaddis is publications director at the ABSC.



Gaddis

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EIB4HIM

continued from page 21

Christian.

"It would be almost impossible for a local church in Arkansas to send people to Southeast Asia without

full-time people being on the field," Fielding said. "You can send a team for a week or two and start to build relationships, but there is a language barrier and no long term credibility or trust. So the genius of having long-term people on the field is that they know

the language and culture, and they have built those long-term relationships."

This is why IMB personnel need prayer partners, additional churches to support them financially and individuals who are willing to come to the field. Mission trip opportunities in-

clude evangelism in outlying islands; mentoring and training Baptist pastors in a known church; serving in medical and dental clinics and improving water filtration; backpacking to remote locations; and assisting with a coffee business. More information will be distributed during the eib4Him Summit.

Event times are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 29,

and 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 30, at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention located at 10 Remington Drive, Little Rock. Online registration for this event is open at absc.org/eib, and the cost covers lunch both days and program expenses. Early bird registration is \$15 per person through Aug. 31, and registration after this date is \$25 per person.

TESTIMONY

continued from page 22

than 100 kids heard the gospel message this summer, and five have chosen to follow Christ and begin discipleship.

"I love experiencing CP stories, I love journeying with two

young men, who have been raised to walk in the newness of life, I love watching life being breathed into a Delta church, and I love enjoying the fruit of hard labor," said David James, ABSC college and young leaders team leader. "It doesn't get much better than this."

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For more information please call the Evangelism & Church Health office at 1-800-838-2272, ext. 5128.

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When you get stories about how Arkansas Baptists are making a world of difference in missions through the Cooperative Program.

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CALL 800.227.4444 (toll-free), 501.644.4444 (toll) or go to www.arkbaptists.org/CPShare

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Dear Arkansas Baptist,

The *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) is delighted to offer this special Cooperative Program issue (which includes a special 12-page section) free to all Arkansas Baptist churches – in cooperation with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

To our faithful subscribers, we want to say, "Thank you!" To our non-subscribing churches, we prayerfully ask you to consider signing up for a Group Plan or Every Resident Family Plan.

The ABN is grateful for your church's gifts given through the Cooperative Program, which provides about 44 percent of our budget for operation. (The other portion of our budget comes from the support of subscribers and advertisers.) To ensure the continuance of a unique voice for Arkansas Baptists for generations to come, we need your support!

The ABN is changing with changing times – in addition to our improved print edition, the ABN offers a digital edition and extensive website at arkansasbaptist.org featuring additional Arkansas Baptist-centric news, information and bonus features. Find us on Facebook and Twitter as ArkBaptNews.

These are exciting days as we work together to fulfill Christ's charge to take the gospel across Arkansas and to all the earth!

Become a subscriber today so you don't miss another issue of the ABN. For more information about how your church can read about how God is using Arkansas Baptists to expand His kingdom, call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153, or 800-838-2272, ext. 5153, or visit arkansasbaptist.org/subscribe.

Serving Together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Yarbrough". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Tim Yarbrough
Editor/Executive Director

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