



2012 Southern Baptist Convention

Luter election, 'descriptor' mark meeting

NEW ORLEANS – The election of the first African-American president and a new “descriptor” name for the denomination marked the 155th session of the Southern Baptist Convention June 19-20 – in a city that has experienced rebirth since being devastated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The attendance of the annual meeting was announced at 7,868 registered messengers.

Native New Orleansian Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, was elected by acclamation Tuesday, June 19, as president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

He was nominated by David Crosby, pastor of First Baptist Church, New Orleans, whose 3-minute nomination speech was interrupted four times by enthusiastic applause.



Luter

Luter grew Franklin Avenue from 65 people in a white-flight neighborhood to a congregation of more than 8,000 “when Hurricane Katrina plowed through this part of the world, destroying their facilities and scattering their people all across America,” Crosby said.

“Franklin Avenue is now approaching 5,000 worshippers each Sunday despite the depressed population of our city,” Crosby said, “and last year they baptized more than 200. Fred is the only mega-church pastor I know of who has had to do it twice, and he did it against the trends and against the odds.”

First Baptist Church, New Orleans, took in the Franklin Avenue congregation after Katrina left the

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A New Orleans-style jazz combo plays outside the meeting hall of Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans where the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention was held June 19-20. Nearly 250 Arkansas Baptist messengers were reported to have been in attendance. Photo by Bill Bangham

Ark. Baptists descend on New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS – A small but enthusiastic contingent of Arkansas Baptists traveled to New Orleans for the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Annual Meeting.

Several Arkansas Baptists commented that it is always good to learn about the work Southern Baptists are doing outside of the Natural State – in addition to the work of SBC agencies, institutions and missionaries.

'Love New Orleans'

“We love New Orleans. I think it’s great that we’re about to elect our first black president to the Southern Baptist Convention,” said Manley Beasley, pastor of Hot Springs Baptist Church, Hot Springs.

“It’s always a joy to gather with the Baptist family every year. This is the first time my daughter (Hannah) has been a messenger,” said Wyman Richardson, pastor of Central Baptist Church, North Little Rock.

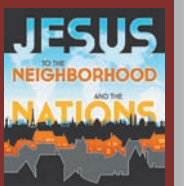
“To me, it’s encouraging to be able to hear what God is doing all around the convention. I have not missed a convention since 1986,” remarked Clay Hallmark, pastor of First Baptist Church, Marion.

“We always come to the convention. We like seeing all our friends and making new friends,” said Ray

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SBC Coverage, pages 8-11

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- Cathey honored at SBC Pastors' Conference
- Cox inducted into Hall of Faith
- Floyds team up to preach
- Crossover reaches New Orleans
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Cherry Valley Baptist feeds thousands through food pantry

Leah Fender
Arkansas Baptist News

CHERRY VALLEY – With a handful of volunteers and the notion that “she just had to do something,” Joan Ball, a member of Cherry Valley Baptist Church, Cherry Valley, has managed to help feed thousands of people in this small, rural community.

“Sometimes the Lord works in mysterious ways, and God placed me in a position where I just had to act,” said Ball.

In 2006, Ball began serving as president of the Cross County School Board, and while visiting one of her schools, a boy caught her attention.

“He was the cutest little boy, and I always seemed to bump into him when I visited that school,” said Ball, “but I soon discovered that he didn’t have food at home, and it broke my heart.”

The youngster Ball encountered is not alone. According to Ball, 75 percent of students in the Cross County School District receive a free or reduced lunch through the government’s National

School Lunch Program, and many of those children do not get any other meals at home.

To meet the qualifications for the government’s free lunch program, families must be at or below the poverty line.

“When you think of kids being hungry, you think of Third World countries like Africa, not Arkansas,” Ball said. “It’s unacceptable that children in our own

backyards are starving.”

Ball knew something had to be done but had no idea what or how.

“For years, I just kept praying and asking the Lord for someone to step up and do something,” Ball added. “Then one evening, the Lord laid it on my heart that I was that someone.”

The next day, she met with her pastor, Gary Powell.

“When Joan first approached me, it was clear the Lord had plans to feed His people and that our church needed to get involved,” said Powell.

However, since Cherry Valley is



Volunteers pack boxes with food for families in need.

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SBC

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newly renovated worship center in 13 feet of water for three weeks amid flooding across New Orleans and the surrounding region in late summer 2005. The two pastors, Crosby and Luter, both with a heart for the city, began to work together in ministry. Out of that relationship, Luter asked Crosby to nominate him when – in January, after prayer and a word from the Lord pointed out to him by his wife, Elizabeth – the Franklin Avenue pastor stepped forward to be a candidate for the SBC presidency.

“He is qualified in every way to hold this office,” Crosby said of Luter. “He fully supports world missions through the Cooperative Program. He is a man of integrity with a loving family and an unblemished, untarnished reputation in this community where he has lived all his life.

“Messengers, we have the opportunity to make history, to show a watching world the truth about our Savior and ourselves and to affirm again the mission that undergirds everything we do. Let’s give our ballots a voice and shout out to the world: ‘Jesus is Lord! This is our president! We are Southern Baptists!’” exclaimed Crosby.

New ‘descriptor’ approved

Messengers approved the descriptor “Great Commission Baptists” by a vote of 53 percent to 46 percent via

ballot vote after nearly a half-hour debate June 19. In all, 4,824 ballots were cast; 2,546 were in favor of the descriptor, and 2,232 were not in favor of the descriptor. Forty-six ballots were disallowed. At the time of the vote, 7,831 messengers were registered. The measure survived some parliamentary maneuvering.

Richard Tribble Jr., a messenger from Emmanuel Baptist Church in Decatur, Ill., objected to the consideration of the recommendation, calling it “divisive in nature, character and application.”

Barry McCarty, the convention’s chief parliamentarian, explained that if two-thirds of the messengers voted against considering the recom-

mendation, discussion would cease. Debate continued after the vote.

Garry Hunnicutt, a messenger from First Baptist Church, Benton, spoke against the proposed descriptor, saying “I see the rebranding as the second step to dismantling the Southern Baptist Convention.”

In debate over the descriptor, Aaron Harvie, pastor of Riverside Community Church in Philadelphia, Pa., and a member of the task force that studied the issue, said he was sent by Southern Baptists to plant a church among people “who greatly misunderstand who Southern Baptists are.”

Resolutions approved

Messengers approved a resolution identifying what is frequently described as a “Sinner’s Prayer” as a biblical way of expressing repentance and faith.



ABN online
Read more SBC coverage
on pages 8-11 and online
at www.arkansasbaptist.org/sbc2012

Debate on the resolution consumed much of the 30 minutes allotted for the first resolutions report scheduled for the day.

With an estimated 80 percent majority, messengers approved the resolution on a “Sinner’s Prayer” with some careful descriptions. The resolution reiterated the belief that “repentance from sin and personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are necessary for salvation” and said such a “crying out for mercy and a calling on the Lord,” which constitute what is often described as a “Sinner’s Prayer,” are a “biblical expression of repentance and faith.”

The resolution also said “a ‘Sinner’s Prayer’ is not an incantation that results in salvation merely by its recitation and should never be manipulatively employed or utilized apart from a clear articulation of the gospel.”

It also urged Southern Baptists to continue to take the gospel to sinners of “every tribe, tongue, and language.”

Messengers defeated two efforts to amend the resolution. One called for removal of the words “a ‘Sinner’s Prayer’” from the resolution’s title and a paragraph. That amendment failed by what appeared to be a comfortable, though not overwhelming, margin.

In addition to the resolution on a “Sinner’s Prayer,” messengers approved the following resolutions on:

– Cooperation and the doctrine of salvation, in apparent response to

differences between Calvinists and non-Calvinists in the convention (see related story, page 10).

- Protecting religious liberty.
- Same-sex marriage and a civil rights rhetoric.
- Biblical scholarship and the doctrine of inerrancy, in affirmation of six-day creation.
- Affirming human needs ministry and community involvement by local churches.
- African-American contributions to American Baptist history.
- 200 years of Baptist ministry in Louisiana.
- Appreciation for those who assisted with the annual meeting in New Orleans.

Full text of resolutions are available at www.arkansasbaptist.org/sbc2012.

Elections held

In addition to Luter’s election, Nathan Lino, pastor of Northeast Houston Baptist Church in Humble, Texas, was unopposed in his election as SBC first vice president.

Dave Miller, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Sioux City, Iowa, was elected SBC second vice president in a runoff election. Miller defeated Eric Hankins, receiving 59.5 percent of votes to Eric Hankins’ 39.5 percent.

John Yeats of Missouri was re-elected recording secretary. Jim Wells, also of Missouri and nominated by Josh Hall of Ozark, was re-elected registration secretary. Both were unopposed.

Written by Tim Yarbrough using Arkansas Baptist News and Baptist Press reports.



Arkansas Baptists worship during Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists June 17 at the New Orleans Hilton Riverside.

PANTRY

continued from page one

a relatively small church – with an average attendance of 60 people in Sunday school each week – resources were limited.

After looking at the Cherry Valley budget, Powell was able to find \$100 a month that the church could give to the food pantry for the next year.

In addition, church members cleared out a small metal storage building located on the old Cherry Valley Elementary School campus to store the food. Then, in 2009, doors to the ministry were opened – with 42,000 pounds of food being distributed the first year alone.

“I was amazed with how many people in our community needed help,” said Powell. “I was also impressed with the number and caliber of volunteers. We couldn’t have made this happen without them.”

However, even with the additional help, the church quickly discovered more assistance was needed. So the church teamed up with Cherry Valley Methodist Church, Vanndale Methodist Church and Vanndale Baptist Church for help with mon-

etary donations, organizing the food pantry, storing the food and recruiting additional volunteers.

As a result, the ministry has been able to keep up with the growing demand.

In 2010, they distributed 89,000 pounds of food, and in 2011, a total of 119,000 pounds.

“We are seeing more and more families come to the food pantry,” said Ball.

“We’re also discovering that for many, this is their first time they are having to rely on a food pantry to put food on the table. They are discouraged, and it’s got to be humiliating for many of them to ask for help,” she said.

The food pantry is open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

“Though we don’t open our doors until 10, by 7 there’s already a line at the door,” said Ball, who stressed the ministry isn’t just a free food hand-out.

“Yes, we are in the business of helping people, but more importantly, we are in the business of bringing people to the Lord,” she said.

When the doors open, the morning starts with a short devotional given by either Powell or Author



Volunteer Pat Kirby, a member of Cherry Valley Baptist Church, gathers food for a family in need at the church’s food pantry.

Barber, pastor of Vanndale Baptist Church, Wynne.

“We’ve seen several people saved during the devotional times at the food pantry,” explained Powell. “That is why we do this – for His glory.”

A year after starting the food pantry, they relocated to an old school building to better accommodate the increasing demand. As a result many other ministries have developed, such as a clothing closet.

“Since we have several rooms to work with now, we are able to store other goods that families may need besides food,” said Ball.

In addition to basic living necessities, such as food and clothing, they

have also helped people find jobs.

“We have a bulletin board where we allow people to post job openings, and many without jobs have been able to find work this way,” said Ball.

“I had no idea how much this ministry would grow in such a short amount of time,” said Ball. “This isn’t just a food pantry; this is an outreach ministry that has literally helped thousands.”

“I just couldn’t imagine choosing between providing food for your family or paying your utility bill, but for many families, this is a daily reality,” Ball added.

Contact Leah Fender at leah@arkansasbaptist.org.

Plane donated to Pilots for Christ

CABOT – A Cessna 210 airplane has been donated to the Arkansas chapter of Pilots for Christ for use in its ministry. The donation was announced at the organization's quarterly meeting held in April at a hangar at the Red Oak Air Park in Cabot.

Business during the meeting included a report on the organization's ministries and the dedication of the local chapter in memory of Jarrett McFarlin, a former pilot and member of Pilots for Christ International who died earlier this year. Additionally, several new members were welcomed into the organization. Lance Winn, a member of East Side Baptist Church, Paragould, serves as chapter president.

"Pilots for Christ International and associated chapters are a non-denominational group of Christian pilots and aviation enthusiasts who wish to serve the Lord Jesus Christ through general aviation," said Don Moore, a member of Pilots for Christ and former executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

"They offer free transportation services to those in need if they meet certain qualifications, which can be found on their website at arkansaspilotsforchrist.com," he said.

The international Pilots for Christ



Dixie McFarlin (right), widow of Jarrett McFarlin, accepts a plaque in honor of the dedication of the Arkansas chapter of Pilots for Christ in his name, from Lance Winn, chapter president. The Cessna 210 airplane (above) was recently donated to Pilots for Christ.

organization was founded in 1985.

The Arkansas chapter was established in 1989 by Bobby Harris, who was present at the meeting.

"Medical missions of mercy and ministries to missionaries and other church leaders are the primary functions of Pilots for Christ," said Moore.

"Besides these ministries, Scrip-

ture distribution and tracts are used to share Christ. The national office has a coordinator that arranges 'leap-frog' connections when distances require additional assistance (in an emergency)," said Moore.

Individuals interested in becoming a part of the Pilots for Christ ministry may email PilotsforChristAR@gmail.com.

Father of the Year protects Supreme Court

Leah Fender
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK – Eddie Davis, the 2012 *Arkansas Baptist News* Father of the Year, is like many single parents and doing his best to raise his children with Christian values. Unlike most dads, however, he is also responsible for protecting one of the state's most important bodies of government – the Arkansas Supreme Court.

"It's a pretty big job at times," said Davis when asked about his role as chief of the Arkansas Supreme Court Police.

Davis is responsible for the security of seven Arkansas Supreme Court judges and 12 Court of Appeals judges.

"Arkansas has 19 appellate judges, and I am responsible for their safety 24/7," said Davis.

In fact, he recently had to move to Little Rock due to a new rule that he must be within 15 minutes of the courthouse in case of an emergency.

In addition, he is responsible for

the safety of all the employees that work in the Justice Building.

"There are about 300 people that work here. People may think that I don't do much, but we've had some incidents here that were potentially very dangerous," he said.

Despite the precarious nature of his job at times, he feels that he is

called to this position and Christians have been doing this work for thousands of years.

"In Nehemiah, he appointed people to take care of people who were not doing right. Basically, they were the policemen of Nehemiah, and Nehemiah said,

'I am appointing you because God says that we can't compromise and we have to do what's right,'" said Davis.

That being said, though, it isn't always easy for Davis. At times, he has had to wrestle with putting his personal convictions aside for the sake of protecting Little Rock citizens.

"When I first started in law enforcement, I was tasked with protecting an abortion group. Planned Parenthood was there, and we were supposed to take care of them," said Davis. "It was a huge struggle for me. I had to come to terms with the fact that they still had the right to say what they want without getting hurt whether I agree with them or not."

While faced with compromising situations at times, Davis believes "as a Christian, what's right is right and what's wrong is wrong" and relies on his faith to get him through some of life's hardest struggles.

"When my wife died, I had to rely on God," said Davis. "He just showed me so many things that I never thought about. I never in my whole entire life thought that I'd be a single parent with three kids. I took my life for granted, but He was faithful through the whole thing. Going through that, this job is simple. I am so fortunate. It could be a lot worse. We've survived, we've moved on and life is OK. God is faithful."

Because of his position, he has had a chance to witness to a couple of people who have crossed his path at the courthouse.

"We have an office that deals solely with prisoners, and it's tough on their families. You have to be careful what you say, but if I ever get an opportunity to share, I do," said Davis.

Contact Leah Fender at leah@arkansasbaptist.org.



Eddie Davis, the 2012 *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) Father of the Year, is chief of the Arkansas Supreme Court Police.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest to Arkansas Baptists

Supreme Court strikes profanity, nudity policy

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT on June 21 ruled against the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) policy regulating curse words and nudity on broadcast television, Fox News reported. In an 8-0 decision, the high court threw out fines and sanctions imposed by the FCC. The case involved some uncensored curse words and brief nudity on various networks, including Fox News. "Because the FCC failed to give FOX or ABC fair notice prior to the broadcasts in question that fleeting expletives and momentary nudity could be found actionably indecent, the Commissions' standards as applied to these broadcasts were vague," the Supreme Court said. The court said the FCC is "free to modify its current indecency policy" in light of the ruling.

Cameron documentary explores U.S. history

KIRK CAMERON'S documentary, "Monumental: In Search of America's National Treasure," will be released on DVD July 4. The documentary explores the roots and history of the United States in a bid to get to the root of what's ailing the soul of our nation, according to press reports. The documentary marks Cameron's debut as a producer and host.

Simpson thankful after U.S. Open win

SAN FRANCISCO (BP) – A tense finish to the U.S. Open may have been difficult on Webb Simpson's emotions, but a boost to his prayer life. "I probably prayed more the last three holes than I've ever done in my life," Simpson said after winning the tournament June 17. "It helped me stay calm and get in with 2-under (on the final day of the tournament)." Simpson finished at 1-over for the tournament and left the course without ever holding the lead. But Jim Furyk and Graeme McDowell faltered in their own final rounds, leaving Simpson with his first major title. "He knows that his hope is not in golf," said Ryan Carson, student pastor at Forest Hills Church in Charlotte, N.C., where Webb and his wife Dowd are members. "He knows that his hope is in the Lord, and that perspective."

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

SBC New Orleans made history for lots of reasons

A lot will be written about the “historic” election and vote that took place at the recent Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

What might be overlooked by some is how the city has been re-made following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. A visitor to New Orleans today sees little or no lasting signs of the hurricane.



PRESSING ON

Tim Yarbrough

Long forgotten by some are scenes on TV of residents in New Orleans being rescued from rooftops or lying dead along streets of the city.

Yes, New Orleans is back and made history this past week as the location of the election of the first African-American president of the Southern Baptist Convention and where messengers decided

they would call themselves “Great Commission Baptists” – if they so choose.

A lot of other things are back to normal in New Orleans as well.

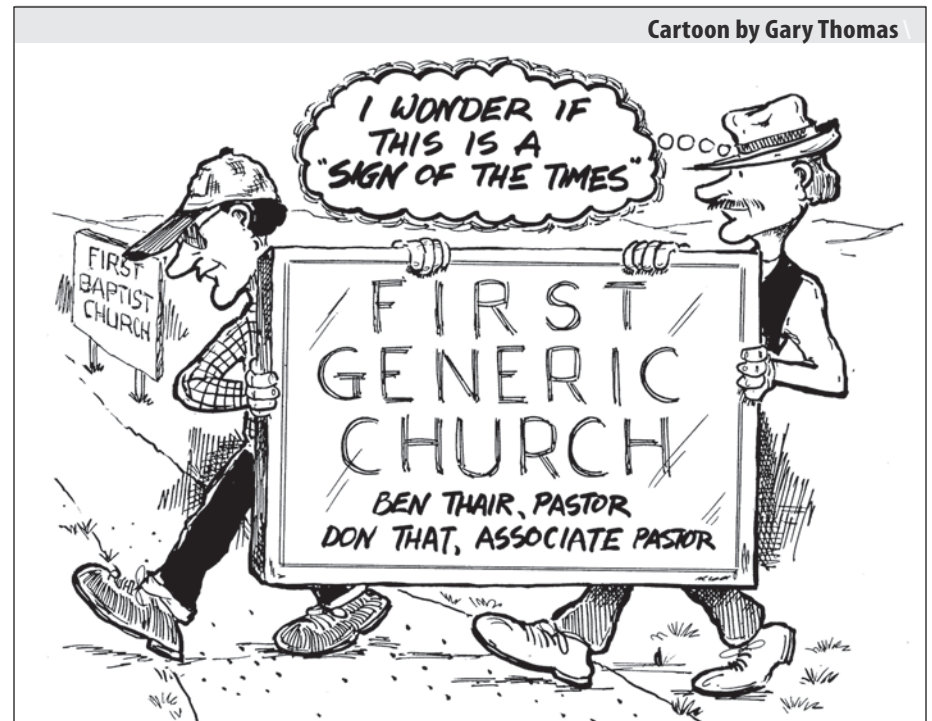
As my wife and I walked along its streets, we saw homeless people and were confronted by beggars on numerous occasions.

In the French Quarter, we walked by the various bars, nightclubs, strip

shows and peep shows that have, for years, been an attraction for revelers visiting the city – and saw drunks staggering and others vomiting openly as tourists passed by.

Yes, things seem to be back to normal in New Orleans.

However, it was a blessing at the same time to witness the efforts by some faithful Southern Baptists who made their way to New Or-



leans early for Crossover outreach events, resulting in hundreds of people making decisions for Jesus Christ.

While it is fun to visit places like New Orleans, Southern Baptists should use such visits as a reminder the devil is alive and well and still very much in the business of

destroying lives of people, such as those who reside in the city.

Consider adding the people of New Orleans to your prayer list – petitioning the Lord daily to bring a revival to this historic city.

Tim Yarbrough is editor of the Arkansas Baptist News. Email him at tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

The real issue

The writer of “Presidential position” (ABN, June 14, 2012) is correct in stating that the Constitution of the United States is to be applied equally to all citizens, but is wrong in his application of that meaning. The protections provided under our Constitution apply to persons, not behaviors, and there is a difference between the two. A “person” is either male or female. Their “race” is a physical feature that further defines their personhood; they are still either male or female. “Behavior” refers to one’s actions, not to one’s personhood. Behaviors are driven by our desires, and homosexuality is a behavior driven by a same-sex desire; desires can be controlled and behaviors can change, but race cannot.

All of our laws, including our Constitution, do discriminate, but they discriminate against behaviors, not persons. For example, the First Amendment’s freedom of religion

protection discriminates against those who, through their behavior, would try to force their form of worship on to others. It discriminates against their behavior, not them as persons. Laws must discriminate against certain behaviors for the betterment of society.

The issue of same-sex marriage is not an issue of equal rights. Homosexuals already have equal rights under the Constitution. There is nothing stopping same-sex couples from having a private marriage ceremony where

they can pledge lifelong fidelity to one another; it just won’t be government sanctioned/endorsed, and that’s the real issue in this debate.

Why is government endorsement so important? This is the only way for those dealing with same-sex attraction to quell their conscience. If they can get society’s acceptance and approval of their behavior, then they will feel validated and their consciences cleared. The only venue available for making this happen

is the institution of marriage. By redefining marriage, their immoral behavior now becomes natural and acceptable.

Joe Manning
Jacksonville

‘Massive’ propaganda

This is in response to the letter regarding homosexuality and the Constitution (ABN, June 14, 2012). I think it is a massive stretch of propaganda to claim that the Founding Fathers were demanding that moral perversions were to be institutionally protected by law. On the contrary, virtually all the major leaders who laid the foundation for our nation agreed in explicit quotes that the Constitution can stand as a success only as long as we remain a moral people, and no longer. For example, John Adams remarked in 1789, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” Thomas Jefferson, who has ironically become the poster boy for judicial

activism (on account of his letter to the Baptists about the separation of church and state, but who hated judicial activism with a passion), famously suggested that homosexual soldiers ought to be castrated. We have other more popular and traditional perversions, such as polygamy and prostitution, that are abolished by our laws under the Constitution, so why should we show favoritism to the homosexual crowd ahead of the prostitutes and the polygamists? What’s next on the agenda – people who want to marry their dogs? When will enough be enough? Our civilization is being wrecked by this kind of hypocrisy. Just my 2 cents as a fellow American and Christian, and that and a couple of bucks might buy you a mocha.

Stephan Allsup
Little Rock

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Read more letters to the editor on page 6



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Family Matters

Nine hundred forty

Nine hundred forty – that’s the number of weeks you will have to spend with your children from the time they are born until the time they turn 18. My grandfather said, “Take time to smell the roses.” Another mentor of mine used to say, “Don’t get so busy doing things that you can’t be the person God wants you to be.” I say, “Don’t let you or your kids get so busy doing things that you can’t be the family God wants you to be.”



Phillips

We all have a limited amount of time to utilize every day. Be intentional and consider the eternal impact and influence regarding how you use your time. Your child will spend approximately 14 percent of their time attending church on Sunday if they attend church every Sunday. How will you use the other 86 percent of their days to make a spiritual impact?

Evaluating the amount of time I have left can help me prioritize how I expend my time. My daughter is 15 years old – 150 weeks left. My middle son is 12 – 291 weeks left. My youngest son is 8 – 508 weeks left. Time is ticking away. From the time I write this article until the time you read it a week will have passed. My youngest son will have finished playing his last season of machine-pitch baseball, and my middle son will have attended his last vacation Bible school.

What is my bucket list for what I want to invest in my children during those 940 weeks? What Scriptures do I want them to have memorized? How many times will they read through the Bible? What books do I want them to have read? What mission trips do I want to take with them? What kinds of ministry do I want them to have experienced? What life skills do I want them to have? What do I want them to know about the Christian faith? What convictions would I like to see them develop?

What intentional investments did you make in your children last week? You can’t change the past, but you can change the future and the way you choose to intentionally invest your time in the next generation – this week, next week and however many weeks you have left!

Ben Phillips leads the Arkansas Baptist State Convention family ministry team.

I apologize for burdening you ...

It was my first church job, and I was the “associate pastor.” We did not have a “senior pastor”; we just had a pastor and an associate pastor. What was the difference? The pastor could decide which of the responsibilities he wanted and which ones I was required to do. And he got paid a lot more.

I told a senior adult ladies class that we were going to “split” their class and make a new one. When a couple of ladies suggested they thought this was a bad idea, I told them they were wrong and that they were being selfish. When a couple more suggested they could go to church somewhere else, I gave them the names of some good churches. From this experience, I learned how to apologize.

First, apologize quickly. Don’t wait until you are pressured, or forced or have no choice. Get it done as soon as you know you have messed up. The longer offended people rehearse your mistake, the more contrite your apology has to be in order to communicate effectively.

Second, never apologize for what the other person has done wrong. “I should not have spoken harshly to you, but your lack of concern for others really bothered me” is not an apology, but a camouflaged complaint. Apologies should admit you were wrong and should include a commitment to refrain from repeating your error. “I spoke harshly, and this was the wrong thing for me to do. You ladies deserved more respect than I demonstrated. I not only ask your forgiveness, but I also assure you that I will not do this again” is an appropriate apology – it includes no reference to what they did, but

only to what I did.

Never offer an apology that is contingent. “If I have offended anyone, I want to apologize” or “To those of you who were offended by my words, behavior, etc., I sincerely apologize” are not apologies. They are suggestions that some folks are more sensitive than others. Apologize without dividing the world into those who were offended and those who were not. Besides, you can be wrong, stupid and mean and some folks will never know it or be offended by it. This does not mean you are excused.

When you have messed up in public, apologize in public and privately. When you have messed up in private, apologize in private. To apologize in public for a private error advertises the error, not the apology. To apologize for a public error, first talk to the person to

whom you owe the apology, then to the group in whose presence you erred. “I spoke harshly to Brother Jones last week in the business meeting; I have talked with him and asked him to forgive me. I hope you all will forgive my harsh words.”

The core material of a legitimate apology is repentance. If you have sinned, you should repent. If you repent of your sin, you ask those you have hurt for their forgiveness. Apology without repentance is merely words without meanings.

By the way, the senior adult ladies forgave me, and we started a new Sunday school class.

Emil Turner is executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. His upcoming schedule includes preaching July 1 and July 8 at First Baptist Church, DeWitt.



A PASTOR’S HEART

Emil Turner

Why have a church endowment?

Why have a church endowment? The more appropriate question may be, “Why not have a church endowment?” An endowment operates differently from annual giving in that it enhances the mission of the church apart from the general operating budget. It provides a permanent fund to support the church during and even beyond a member’s lifetime.

Church endowments provide perpetual income for designated or undesignated purposes (depending on how the church has its endowment set up). The church can use the endowment income for the underlying purposes while the principal remains invested to produce future income and enough growth to counteract inflation. Some donors prefer to only give an estate gift to a church when they know that only the income will be used with the principal not being spent. For many, this parallels the way they have lived personally. Endowments are the mechanism to accomplish this objective. By providing the option, the church does not preclude a

member giving an outright estate gift. It is simply an additional option being made available.

A church endowment provides an ongoing instrument for its members related to an (1) outright gift while living and/or (2) estate gift when one passes away. As an example, a church could promote its endowment to members by encouraging them to leave at least 10 percent of their estate through a will or trust to the church endowment. Many Arkansas Baptists have never considered the possibility of leaving at least part of their estate to ministry because they have never been presented with the idea. Church endowments provide a practical instrument that can be used in presenting the idea.

The bottom line is that church endowments can provide funding for kingdom work that it might not otherwise have available to accomplish its work. Again, the question that should be asked is, “Why not have a church endowment?”

Jeff Steed is vice president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

FINANCIAL TIMES

*Jeff Steed
Arkansas Baptist Foundation*



Read any good books lately?

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

Preferably, the book review should be no more than 350 words and should be about a book released

in the past six months.

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

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



Letters: communion, Mormons and the S.B.C.

God help us!

Bob Hartsell's letter "Presidential position" in the June 14 issue of ABN seems plausible at first reading, but upon reflection reveals a flawed understanding of our U.S. Constitution. He attempted to convince us that President Obama's approval of same-sex marriage was only support of "... the right of same-sex couples to marry and be treated as equal citizens under the law." The presidential oath, he says, was to "... defend the Constitution of the United States" and not the Bible. Mr. Hartsell further indicated that the president was not endorsing same-sex marriage as a way of life. I wonder what Hartsell thinks the present administration's endorsement of June as "gay pride" month signifies if not an endorsement of same-sex marriage as a way of life.

There is no mention of marriage in the constitution, and especially is there no right given by the federal government to regulate marriage. All powers not specifically given to the three branches of federal government are reserved for the states. Therefore, the states have the right to have state constitutions define marriage. Thankfully, we have done that here in Arkansas. By an overwhelming majority, our state has

come down on the side of God's definition of marriage (which is the only legitimate one).

The same reasoning used by Mr. Hartsell would nullify any ban on polygamy, which is also on the liberal agenda. Muslims will be clamoring for this new definition of marriage just as homosexuals have done. According to Mr. Hartsell's reasoning, they have a rightful constitutional claim for "liberty and justice" for their view of marriage.

I believe the Founding Fathers could not imagine this country allowing and promoting the abominations now done by our federal government. God help us!

Larry Fisher
Beebe

Open/close communion

I have been on vacation and just came back and read the ABN. I was surprised to find the support of open communion (ABN, June 14, 2012). However, our church (First Baptist Church of Lowell) has been a strong supporter (and usually outnumbered) of the belief of open communion. We felt like we stood

alone with most SBC churches. I like what Wyman Richardson said about open communion: "that it makes the door wide as the door to heaven and that open communion demonstrates the love that Christ

has for all of His church." I believe that when people are not offered communion (though believers) in a local church it sends a message that you are not good enough to be one of us ... it appears to foster a sense of arrogance/pride ... something I could not personally see Jesus doing. I know the other side and their arguments, but open communion seems to us at FBC, Lowell, the Christ-like thing to do and practice.

Gary E. Thomas
Lowell

Mormon 'pointers'

In response to Mr. Turner's advice to our Mormon friends (ABN, May 31, 2012), I would suggest that the SBC leadership could take some pointers from the Mormons. As pointed out in Mr. Turner's opinion piece, Mormons have had a strong presence within our gov-

ernment for a long time. However, they have had the good sense to accomplish this without directly involving their official church organization in the dirty business of politics. Let's get back to promoting Christ through our state and national organizations and leave the politics to individuals.

David Rauls
Nashville

S.B.C. = Select Beings

As an 88-year-old lady and a member of my (SBC) church, I think we should be "S.B.C."

It could stand for "Southern Baptist," "Sweet Believers," "Second Born," "Some Bodies," "Select Beings."

Now you name some?

S.B.C. could be comfortable with those letters all over the world, and Praise the Lord, we are.

Mary King
Arkadelphia

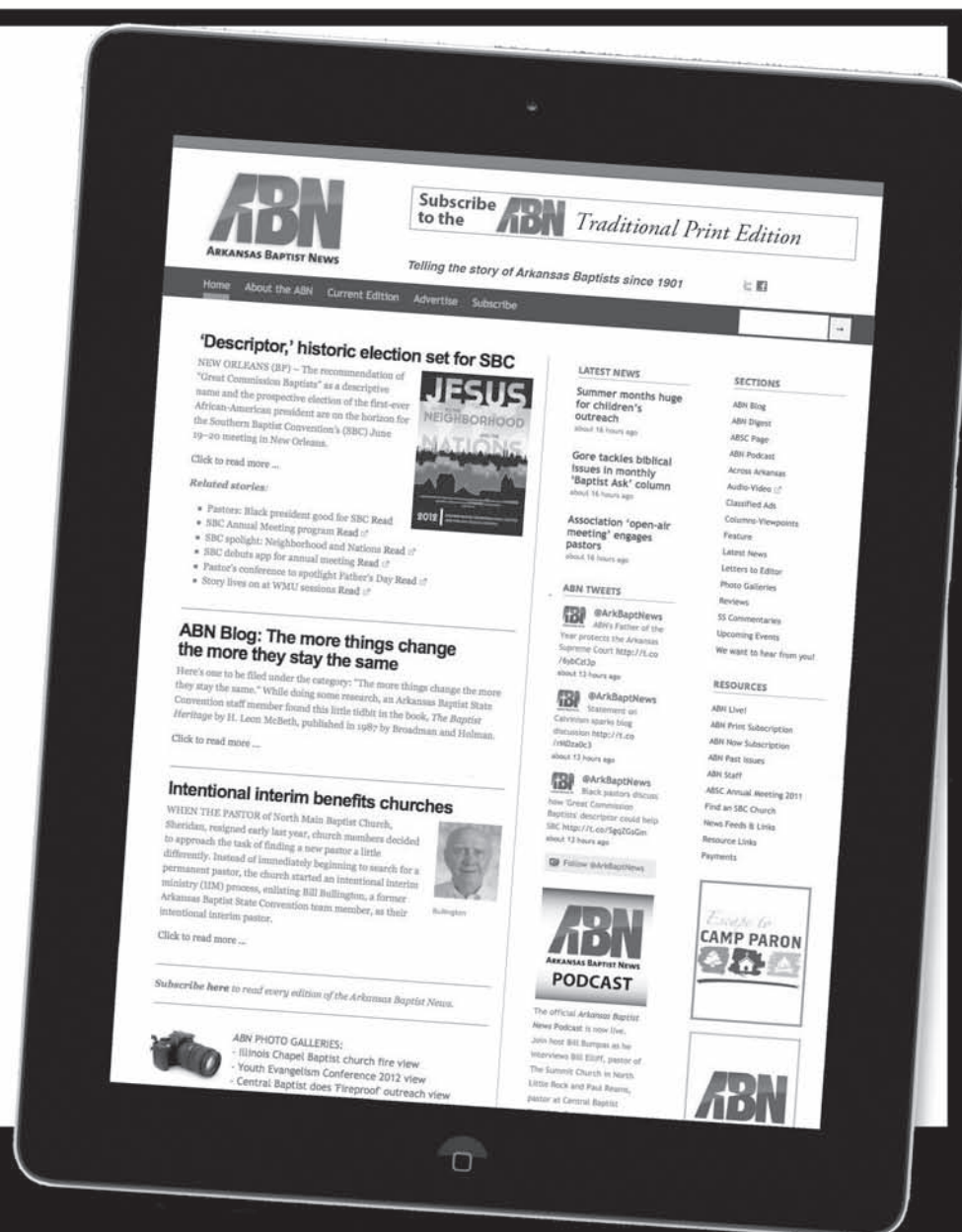
Letters to the editor

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Our churches:

Union Avenue Baptist celebrates 50th anniversary

Jessica Vanderpool
Arkansas Baptist News

WYNNE – It was 1962 – the year of the Cuban missile crisis, the year John Glenn orbited the earth and the year Union Avenue Baptist Church, Wynne, was established.

“We were in the middle of a nuclear arms race. We were in the middle of a space race. ... And a church right here in Wynne, Arkansas, begins to win souls to Christ,” said William Jaques, Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) leadership and worship team member, who presented a certificate to the church during their 50th anniversary celebration June 10.

“It’s an amazing thing to stand before a church that has been committed to sharing the gospel (and) making the kingdom known throughout Arkansas and across the world as you cooperate together with other Arkansas Baptist churches to support missionaries and mission efforts,” Jaques added.

Though Union Avenue officially became a church in 1962, it began as Wynne Baptist Chapel – a mission of Wynne Baptist Church, Wynne –



Gary Henson (right), pastor of Union Avenue Baptist Church, Wynne, prays before the offering with charter members and deacons. From left: John Horton, deacon; Kemp Midkiff, charter member; Ralph Doss, charter member and deacon, and Bobby Moore, charter member and deacon.

five years earlier.

Many memories are tied up in the 50-plus years since the mission first began, and current, former and charter members, as well as former pastors, were encouraged to share those memories during the anniversary celebration.

Gerald Perry, who served as the

first pastor when the church was a mission, was a student at Ouachita Baptist University when he was recommended to the pastorate. He accepted, but since he didn’t own a car, he would stick out his thumb and hitchhike to church. And he remembers the revival where 61 were baptized – all but one of whom were adults. He said every person they prayed for came to Christ.

Jo Chesser, wife of Zane Chesser, who was pastor when Union Avenue became a church, reminisced on how the church treated her family.

“If there was anything I would title for Wynne, it was how they knew how to love and take care of a pastor and his family – and other people too,” she said.

Jeff Epps, member of Wynne Baptist, led music during the celebration while Perry shared a message. Perry’s message focused on the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19. He spoke of the change Christ brings.

“That which He does during His earthly ministry, He continues to seek to do through His church and through His individual followers,” Perry said. “Christ came to change. He didn’t come to leave things as the status quo. He came to make things better.”

“Christ continues to seek the Zacchaeuses of our day,” he added. “Listen, Union Avenue, this is why you’re here – because God desires to reach the Zacchaeuses that you’ll reach.”

One of the ways Union Avenue reached out was by starting a mission, which is now a constituted church – Ridgeview Baptist Church.

Gary Henson, current pastor of Union Avenue, thanked Wynne Baptist for its vision of starting Union

Avenue as a mission 55 years ago.

“Not only does Wynne Baptist Church have a roll in each person who’s been saved through Union Avenue, but also now you ... have a roll in everybody that’s saved at Ridgeview,” Henson said.

Union Avenue’s half-century of ministry has not been without struggles. The church suffered a fire in 2001 that forced them to relocate temporarily while rebuilding on their current property.

Ray Dean Davis, associational missionary for Tri County Baptist Association, was pastor of Union Avenue at the time.

He shared his own memories of the church – including memories of housing his office in a beauty shop while they rebuilt – and then drew the congregation back to the present.

“You know, it’s fun to remember, and reflect, and reminisce and all

of that, but church, I need to remind you of something – you cannot stay there,” Davis said. “These memories have all been good, ... but they’re memories. They’re the past. We cannot stay in the past.”

“My prayer is that you will allow the Lord and Brother Gary to lead you to new horizons. My prayer is that you will become more than you’ve ever been. My prayer is you will

come more than you’ve ever dreamed – that you will become what God has planned for you to be.”

Henson concluded the celebration.

“We have shared what a great God we have and what God has done with the little abilities that we have, the little finances that we have, the little community that we live in and how far-reaching God’s ability (is) to use us to reach out to the world with the gospel,” Henson said. “And what I thought as I was hearing all that is, ‘Why would we think for a minute that there’s any limit to what we can do now for God?’”

“Let’s don’t lose that faith in God,” he said. “Let’s don’t hold the reigns and say, ‘God, we can’t.’ Let’s let go and say, ‘God, we’ll go wherever You want us to go and do whatever You want us to do.’”

“And then 50 years from now they’re going to look back and say, ‘I don’t see how that little bunch did it.’ And ... some old preacher will get up and say, ‘That old bunch didn’t do it. God did it.’”

“We can do whatever God wants us to do when we work together and serve the Lord,” Henson concluded.

Contact Jessica Vanderpool at jessica@arkansasbaptist.org.



Bobby Walker (left), along with his wife, Johnney, were honored June 10 at Eastside Southern Baptist Church, Cave City, for 50 years of pastoral service in Arkansas.

Walker honored by Eastside Baptist for 50 years of pastoral ministry

CAVE CITY – Bobby Walker, along with his wife, Johnney, were honored at Eastside Southern Baptist Church, Cave City, for 50 years of pastoral service in Arkansas. Bobby was presented with a plaque honoring his service, and Johnney was given a wall tapestry to remember the occasion.

Their children, Randy Walker and Sherry Savage, and their families were present.

Bobby served as interim pastor of Eastside Southern Baptist and was previously named pastor emeritus of the church. Walker’s ministry includes serving three years as full-time pastor of First

Baptist Church, Grubbs. He also served for 12.5 years at Natural Steps Baptist Church, Roland. He retired from full-time pastoral ministry after spending 18 years at First Baptist Church, Danville. Since retirement, he continues to preach and serve the Lord when called upon.

To celebrate, the church had a potluck lunch. Jerry Miller, associational missionary of Caroline Baptist Association, presented special musical numbers, and Don Moore, retired executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention shared a message.

Arkansas Baptists descend on New Orleans

BAPTISTS

continued from page one

Dean Davis, associational missionary for the Tri County Baptist Association.

Pastors' Conf. sermons

"We enjoyed the pastors' conference because it's a good break for the pastor. There have been 14 sermons, and my husband has heard every one of them," added Rhonda Brooks, a pastor's wife who resides in Monticello.

Mountainburg evangelist Tom Cox remarked about this year's annual meeting, "This is one of the best conventions we've had in a long time."

"The convention has been very quiet and enjoyable and fun. I like to see my fellow seminary friends from Mid-America (Baptist Theological Seminary) I met over 30 years ago," said Marvin Emmons, pastor of First Baptist Church, Green Forest.

'Excited' about Luter

Sonny Tucker, team leader for the Arkansas Baptist State Conven-

tion evangelism and church growth team, who was with Archie Mason, pastor of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, said, "We're both excited about Dr. Luter becoming president. We celebrate the great accomplishments of Southern Baptists throughout this year."

"I'm humbled by the fact that I got to be here on this historic occasion. The election of Fred Luter is a wonderful thing, and I feel blessed to be a part of it. We're also glad to be here to be a part of the name change as well," said Denny Lewis, pastor of Cabin Creek Baptist in Lamar.



Brooks



Emmons

'Dynamic' speakers

Lori Magar of First Baptist Church, Lincoln, said the broad range of speakers is a big attraction of the annual meeting.

"My favorite part of the convention was the pastors' conference because of the dynamic speakers. We had big names this year. I liked the preaching of Tony Evans, and Dennis Swanberg made me laugh," said Magar.

Rebecca Thompson of Philadelphia Baptist Church, Jonesboro, said she attended the Ministers' Wives



Manley Beasley (right), pastor of Hot Springs Baptist Church, Hot Springs, with wife, Shirleen, along with church members Graig Cowart and Rusty Hunter.

Luncheon and learned about a new ministry to the women in Nigeria.

"I learned about the Widow's Oil Ministry," said Thompson, adding, "In the (Nigerian) culture, it is legal when a man dies for members of his family to come and take everything from the widow as punishment for being Christian. That's why there's such a need for pastors' widows there."

'New direction for SBC'

Eric Hodge, pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church, Crossett, said that when he goes back to his church, he will tell his congregation of the positive experience he had at the meeting.

"As a denomination, we're headed in a new direction," he said.

Written by Tim Yarbrough, with reporting by Lisa Falknor.



Lori Magar (above left), wife of Randy Magar, pastor at First Baptist Church, Lincoln, and Karen Lomax, wife of Ron Lomax, director of missions for Washington Madison Baptist Association. Martha and George Hendrix (right), messengers from First Baptist Church, Greenland.



Anthony Rhodes (top left), pastor of worship and educational life at Life Line Baptist Church, Little Rock, and Tony Jones (top right), minister of music, First Baptist Church, Des Arc. Jerry Miller (above left), associational missionary for Caroline Baptist Association, and Frank Thurman (above right), pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Benton. Denny and Cathy Lewis (left), with children, Elijah and Caty Clark. Lewis is pastor of Cabin Creek Baptist Church, Lamar.

Ark. Baptists elected to SBC posts

NEW ORLEANS - A number of Arkansas Baptists were elected by the 2012 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Committee on Nominations to serve in various SBC posts.

Russell Harrington, Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, and Don Pucik, OneChurch, Conway, were elected to serve as Arkansas representatives on the 2012-13 SBC Committee on Nominations. Pucik will serve as chairman.

Others included:

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary - Schanon D. Caudle, North Park, Van Buren; James O. Norman, Valley, Searcy, and Nick Floyd, Cross Church, Fayetteville.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary - James Craig Campbell, First, Russellville, and Gary L. Hollingsworth, Immanuel, Little Rock.

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary - R.E. Clark, First, Gravette.

Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary - Jeffrey L. Dial, Life Line, Little Rock.

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary - Arthur W. Barrett Jr., First, Harrison, and Ronnie H. Deal, First, Greenwood.

Additionally, Jeff Thompson, a member of First Baptist Church, Greenwood, and associational missionary for Concord Baptist Association, Fort Smith; and Craig Jenkins, pastor of Beech Street First Baptist Church, Texarkana, served on the SBC Committee on Committees prior to the annual meeting June 19-20. Alan Brown of Freeman Heights Baptist Church, Berryville, served on the SBC Credentials Committee.

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story ideas.

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email abn@arkansasbaptist.org.



Sam Cathey (center) with wife, Lucille, and Grant Ethridge, president of the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors' Conference and former Arkansas Baptist pastor.

Former Arkansas Pastor Cathey honored at Pastors' Conference

NEW ORLEANS – Sam Cathey, 77, former pastor of First Baptist Church, Bearden, and a native of Camden, was honored for his lifelong work in evangelism and church planting at the 2012 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Pastors' Conference Sunday, June 17.

Cathey is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Immanuel Baptist Seminary. He and his wife, Lucille Lawson, have three daughters.

In addition to pastoring in Arkansas, Cathey served as pastor for 10 years in Michigan, serving in various denominational capacities. While in Michigan, he assisted in establishing more than

200 new churches. From 1989 to 1996, he served as pastor of Graceway Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Saved at the age of 10, Cathey was called to preach at age 16 and led his own father to faith. Throughout the years, Cathey preached across the United States in numerous revivals, Bible conferences and evangelistic meetings.

He is president of Sam Cathey Ministries and former president of the national Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists.

Cathey is the author of five books and has written for a number of periodicals.

He became a full-time evangelist in July 1996.



Arkansas Baptists at SBC

Mallory, Sue, Will and Eric Howerton (top photo). Howerton is the pastor at First Baptist Church, Greenland. Eric Hodge (above), pastor of Mount Olive Church, Crossett. Dale and Rebecca Thompson of Philadelphia Baptist Church, Jonesboro, with children, Toby and Elizabeth.



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Archie Mason (left), pastor of Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, and Sonny Tucker, Arkansas Baptist State Convention staff. "We're both excited about Dr. Luter becoming president. We celebrate the great accomplishments of Southern Baptists throughout this year," said Tucker.



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Parchment fragment from Isaiah B scroll. Courtesy of The Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Photo credit: Gabi Laron

Ramsey elected president of Baptist Evangelists

Tom Cox inducted into SBC Hall of Faith

NEW ORLEANS – Evangelist Tom Cox of Mountainburg was inducted into the Southern Baptist Evangelist Hall of Faith Sunday, June 18, at the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists meeting.

John Bos, an evangelist from Orlando, Fla., also was inducted. Past Hall of Faith inductees include Billy Graham, E. J. Daniels, Junior Hill and Angel Martinez.

The Southern Baptist Evangelist Hall of Faith was estab-



Cox

lished in 2008 and is housed at the North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga. The Hall of Faith is reserved for evangelists who have devoted their lives to the biblical office of the evangelist, faithfully taking the gospel to the masses.

Cox was noted for his four decades of evangelistic efforts to the northwest United States, India, Peru and Uganda. He and his wife, Kay, have served in 121 coun-

tries. Tom Cox World Ministries was established in 1971 and has been based in Mountainburg since 1983.

Ramsey elected president

Eric Ramsey, Cox's son-in-law who assumed leadership of the Cox organization in 2007, was elected president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists at the meeting.

Ramsey, also of Mountainburg, serves as an evangelist and

mission strategist for the Cox organization. He also authors a regular column in the *Arkansas Baptist News* titled "Answer the Call."

"One of my primary goals is to begin the process of rebuilding a biblical understanding of the office of the evangelist and lead Southern Baptist evangelists on a journey of methodological retooling for the diverse contexts of the 21st century," Ramsey said following his election.



Ramsey

Calvinism addressed at 2012 SBC meeting

NEW ORLEANS (BP) – The issue of Calvinism was addressed from the platform during the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Annual Meeting proceedings several times, with each speaker urging messengers to remain united for the Great Commission.

SBC Executive Committee President Frank Page – who said he's not a Calvinist – addressed each side of the debate. He told the non-Calvinists: "There seems to be some non-Calvinists who are more concerned about rooting out Calvinists than they are about winning the lost for Christ."

He then addressed Calvinists,

some of whom he said "seem to think that if we do not believe the same thing about soteriology that they believe then somehow we are less intelligent or ignorant."

Soteriology is the study of the doctrine of salvation.

"I do believe we can find some ways to work together better," Page said, "and I believe that the leaders of both of these groups can come together to say, 'Here's how we can return to working together like we once did.'"

Page confirmed again that he plans to assemble a group of advisers to help chart a way through the

division surrounding Calvinism. But that will not include revising the Baptist Faith and Message, Southern Baptists' statement of beliefs, he said.

Bryant Wright, SBC president, addressed the issue in his convention sermon.

"Our calling is to be centered on Christ and grounded in the Word, while agreeing to disagree on the finer points of theological issues," Wright said. "May we all agree that Christ ... has given us a very clear message and mission for the church."

Wright added, "If we pride ourselves more on being a traditional

Southern Baptist or more on being a Calvinist or a Reformed theologian, more than we are thankful that we are Christ-centered and biblically based, ... then it is time to repent of theological idolatry."

Messengers also overwhelmingly passed a resolution titled "On Cooperation and the Doctrine of Salvation," which said in part, "We affirm that The Baptist Faith and Message provides sufficient parameters for understanding the doctrine of salvation, so that Southern Baptists may joyfully and enthusiastically partner together in obedience to the Great Commission."

Floyds team up to preach at SBC Pastors' Conference

NEW ORLEANS – Arkansas father-son pastors Ronnie and Nick Floyd teamed up to preach a sermon together during the 2012 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Pastors' Conference built around a Father's Day theme.

The Floyds alternated turns in the pulpit, challenging pastors to develop an expanding vision for their cities.

"Have we forgotten the vision of reaching our cities, our communities, our villages and our towns?" asked Nick Floyd, pastor of the Fayetteville campus of Cross Church.

Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas, with campuses in Springdale and Rogers, lamented that many pastors have forgotten that God has called them to reach the people outside the church where they live. Pastors, he said, must see their calling theologically, providentially and purposefully.

"Where you are is part of God's plan," Ronnie Floyd said. "(God's) providence has guided you, has blessed you ... and has placed you to live in this time in all of human history and to let you live where you

live ... with a purpose.

"God has called you to live where you live, to lead the church you lead, with the gifts you have, for one purpose: to fulfill God's vision of reaching every person in that region with the gospel of Jesus Christ," he said. "You were made for this moment."

Bailey and Josh Smith

Other father-and-son speakers included Baily Smith, former SBC president, and son, Josh.

Bailey Smith introduced the first speaker of the conference, his son Josh. Bailey praised God for all three of his sons, each of whom are serving the Lord in Baptist institutions and churches, and gave most of the credit to his godly wife. He described his son Josh as a child as an energetic grasshopper on roller skates, but he watched God "take his life early and really mold him into something wonderful."

"I realized the first time I heard Josh preach that I wasn't hearing my son, I was hearing a man of God," Bailey Smith said. Turning to his son, he said, "Josh, I love you, and I'm proud of you, not be-

cause you're a good preacher but because you're a man who loves the Lord and preaches His Book."

Josh Smith, pastor of MacArthur Boulevard Baptist Church in Irving, Texas, preached from Jonah 3 on the proper response to God's Word. Noting that most people want to experience the extraordinary instead of the ordinary, Smith reminded pastors, "Big doors swing on small hinges."

Don Wilton

Don Wilton, pastor of First Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S.C., described three pictures from 2 Timothy 2 of what it means to be strong in the grace of God. Pastors, he said, must fight like soldiers, run like athletes and work like farmers in their ministries.

"(God is) calling us to become fathers to our sons and to our daughters, to lead by example and to be the kind of dads in the ministry that God has called us to be," Wilton said.

The United States is facing a battle that may be unprecedented in its history, Wilton said, and the

church needs men who will fight passionately for the gospel.



Nick Floyd

Tony and Anthony Evans

Tony Evans, pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, preached the concluding sermon for the night with his son Anthony Evans, a gospel music artist and recent contestant on NBC's "The Voice," introducing him.

Following the pattern of Psalm 128, Tony Evans preached about the "effervescent" results of a man who fears God. This man, whom Evans called a "kingdom man," takes God seriously, and because he does so, he leads his family according to God's Word. Evans used this second point as an opportunity to speak to the current debate about same-sex marriage.

"What God wants is men, partnering with their wives, who run their families according to God – because the saga of a nation is the saga of the family, in large," he said. "Marriage is not a civil institution; marriage is a divine institution to be recognized in a civil society."

Compiled from Baptist Press reports.



Ronnie Floyd



Victor Benevedes (center) and Eugene Sinceno (left) lead a man to Christ at Carrollton Baptist Church in Kenner, La., during a Crossover event. Photo by John Swain

1,100 people make decisions

Crossover reaches out to New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS (BP) – More than 1,500 Southern Baptist volunteers from 59 New Orleans area churches and many others from across the nation shared the gospel at Crossover, the evangelistic emphasis preceding the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

Their efforts stretched from the Lower Ninth Ward outward to Metairie and Kenner. Counting 38 block parties June 16, as well as special events and door-to-door community evangelism efforts throughout the week, more than 1,100 decisions were made for Christ during Crossover 2012.

Annual Crossover events are a partnership between local Southern Baptist churches, associations and the North American Mission Board (NAMB). NAMB provides funding, strategy and coordination assistance.

"We put a lot of work and preparation into it, and the churches and church planters executed the plan superbly," said Jack Hunter, director of missions for the New Orleans Baptist Association. "God did a great work at this year's Crossover."

One of the 38 area churches hosting a block party was Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, pastored by Fred Luter, who was elected as the SBC's first African-American president during the annual meeting.

"New Orleans is not the same place as in 2005. It's a whole new city," he said. "That's why I'm excited the SBC is here. Baptists came in and helped rebuild our city. It's great to see Baptists come back and see the fruits of their labor."

Thomas Strong, pastor of Metairie

Baptist Church in Metairie, La., said their block party represented another opportunity for the church to let the surrounding community learn more about the church. He said the Crossover volunteers played a critical role in the block party.

"We're all working together at this block party," Strong said. "It's reminding our church that it's not just us. It's not just the churches in our city. It's all of us as Southern Baptists coming together to accomplish God's purpose for us in reaching out."



Logan Boynton, 10, slides down an inflatable water slide during a Crossover event.

Downtown, volunteers fanned out to prayer walk the French Quarter. Starting at the Baptist Friendship House, teams learned about the surrounding community from Executive Director Kay Bennett.

Prior to Saturday, Southern Baptists in New Orleans were making door-to-door community evangelism visits and staging special youth events.

An Awaken the City rally drew about 500 excited and loud high school students from the greater New Orleans area to East Jefferson High School in Metairie Friday night. The rally was co-hosted by Church of the King, a church plant of 400 people that meets at the high school, the New Orleans Baptist Association and Abandon Productions.

"We just want kids to give their hearts to Jesus," said Dean Ross, executive director of Abandon Productions and pastor of Lakeside Church in Metairie. "The theme, Awaken the City, is literally what we want to do in New Orleans. Events like this are great, but movements are better. We want to change the fabric of this city forever."

WMU notes benefits of RA, Challengers role

Julie Walters
Woman's Missionary Union

NEW ORLEANS (BP) – Missions education and involvement for boys, a new tagline and social media were the focus of Woman's Missionary Union's (WMU) report to the Southern Baptist Convention's Annual Meeting.

WMU Executive Director/Treasurer Wanda Lee said the return to WMU of responsibilities for Royal Ambassadors (RA) and Challengers will benefit local churches, providing a more coordinated curriculum for children in missional discipleship and streamlining requests for resources.

"Over the last few years, NAMB (North American Mission Board) and WMU staffs have collaborated on resources for Girls in Action (GA) and Royal Ambassadors, but this transition presents the opportunity to do even more," Lee said June 19. "Beginning in September, each month RA and GA will share the same missionary feature and Bible story, but the teaching plans and overall look and feel will be very gender-specific."

"We recognize there is such a short window of opportunity for shaping young minds to be missions-focused, and we are fully committed to effectively discipling children and students in Southern Baptist missions," Lee said.

WMU President Debby Akerman said WMU offers missions education for all ages and both

genders, including involvement through Mission Friends, GA, RA, Acteens, Challengers, Women on Mission and other missions organizations.

"Missions for Life,' WMU's new tagline, speaks to the fact that whatever your age or stage in life, WMU has missions resources just for you," Akerman said. "While missions education is vitally important as we train the next generation to serve Christ, WMU seeks to equip all ages for missions involvement so others may hear of Jesus, the Giver of eternal life."

"Missions discipleship through WMU helps instill serving others and sharing the love of Christ as a part of our daily lives."

WMU is actively using social media to keep missions at the forefront of people's minds and lives, Lee said.

In addition to print and online resources, every team at national WMU has embraced social media – including Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and Instagram – as a means for sharing missions information.

"Whatever method of communication you prefer, we want to engage you in a two-way conversation about missions," Lee said. "We are here to serve you and to help you and your church be involved in the mission of God and stay informed about the many ways God is at work around our world."

Julie Walters is the WMU corporate communications team leader.

Mission board reports

NEW ORLEANS – International Mission Board (IMB) President Tom Elliff reported on the progress of IMB's Embrace challenge, issued at the 2011 SBC meeting in Phoenix, where he called on Southern Baptist churches to claim responsibility for evangelizing all of the world's then-3,800 unreached, unengaged people groups (UUPGs).

Elliff said 1,281 Southern Baptist churches and entities have indicated an interest in embracing a UUPG. Of that number, 474 churches and entities have taken steps to go deeper in that commitment.

"It means some of you are taking this really seriously, and you're saying, 'We want to count the cost; we want to see what's involved,'" he said. "I want to tell you on behalf of the International Mission Board, we're absolutely thrilled. We welcome you to the field, we rejoice that you've taken up this mantle and we praise God that the kingdom is being expanded because of

your involvement."

North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Kevin Ezell encouraged congregations to get involved in planting churches and supporting church planters.

To underscore the urgency, Ezell quoted statistics showing that in some states in the Northeast, Midwest and the Northwest, there is only one Southern Baptist church for every 20,000-plus people.

In Canada, he said, there is only one church for every 117,000 people. By comparison, the ratio in the South is one in less than 10,000.

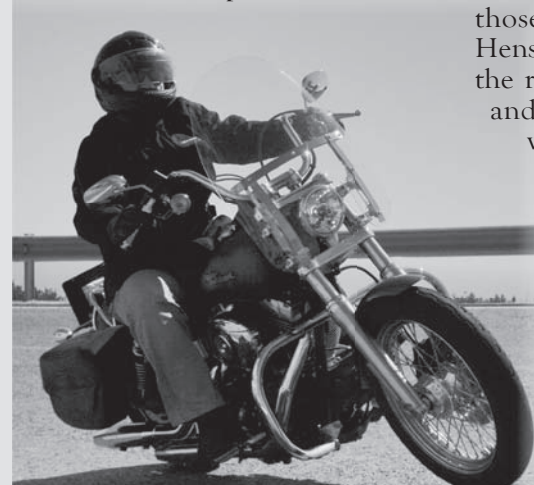
"Church planting is an evangelistic strategy," Ezell said. NAMB has a goal for Southern Baptists to plant a net of 5,000 new churches by 2022, Ezell said. When including churches that die each year, that means Southern Baptists must plant 13,500 new churches.

"We will never be able to plant that many churches unless God does a work in His people," he said.

Motorcycle Faith Run benefits Union Ave. youth

WYNNE – Union Avenue Baptist Church, Wynne, will hold a motorcycle ride June 30 to benefit the church's youth.

Pastor Gary Henson said church member Jimmy Goatcher suggested the Faith Run as a way to help the church's youth attend camp. The ride will begin and end at the church and will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Riders will



make four stops to receive gospel tracts.

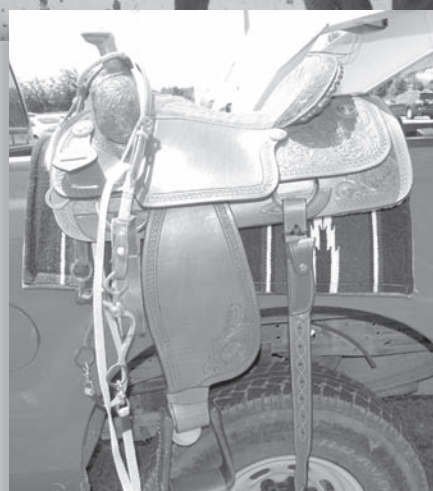
Henson will conduct a "bike blessing" to pray for the riders.

"I will ask God to keep the rider safe and allow them to use their bike as a way to witness," he explained.

"It is my prayer that those participating in the Faith Run will be able to share their faith with those they meet on the ride," Henson said. "I know several of the riders are faithful Christians and use their motorcycles as a way (to) open doors to be able (to) witness. Anytime Christians are active in the community, it is a great thing."

More than 30 riders are already signed up for the ride.

For more information, contact Henson at 870-208-5990.



Boys Ranch donation

Sonora Baptist Church, Springdale, recently purchased a saddle and calf to donate to the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries Boys Ranch. Along with the calf and saddle, two sacks of feed, a blanket and a bridle made by former church member Scott Smith were donated. Funds for the donation came from Mother's Day and Father's Day offerings, with a majority raised during vacation Bible school. "It was so exciting to the kids to give to this cause," said Pastor Danny Williams.

Happy Birthday!

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

- ◆ **July 7:** Kevin J., OBU Box 3427, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Central Asia.
- ◆ **July 14:** Clayton Case, OBU Box 3421, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Chile.
- ◆ **July 23:** Alison Williams, OBU Box 3452, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Thailand.

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Classifieds

PASTOR

River Road Baptist Church in Redfield is seeking a **part-time pastor**. Resumes to P.O. Box 161, Redfield, AR 72132 or river013@centurytel.net. 501-397-2576 or 501-554-6220.

North Main Church in Sheridan is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Resumes may be sent to firechapln@aol.com or North Main Baptist Church, 707 North Main Street, Sheridan, AR 72150.

Seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to Search Committee, Temple Baptist Church, 5100 S. 31st St., Fort Smith, AR 72901. 479-646-1241.

First Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. For information or to submit resumes, email hgreen@seark.net or mail to First Baptist Church, 6501 S. Hazel St., Pine Bluff, AR 71603.

First Baptist Church, Morrilton, is prayerfully seeking a **full-time senior pastor** after the retirement of our pastor of 23 years. Resumes may

be emailed to fbc-morrilton@suddenlinkmail.com or sent to FBC Morrilton, Pastor Search Committee, 200 E. Church St., Morrilton, AR 72110.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Lonoke Baptist Church in Lonoke is seeking a **full-time youth minister** as part of multistaff. Please send resumes to 406 W. Front St., Lonoke, AR 72086, or email lonokebc@sbcglobal.net.

First Baptist Church of Paragould is seeking a **worship leader**. Additional duties, roles and responsibilities will be added in keeping with this person's gifts and calling. Submit resumes in confidence to First Baptist Church, Attn: Personnel Team, P.O. Box 816, Paragould, AR 72451, or fax to 870 236-8585.

Community ministries director wanted for North Pulaski Association. Job is part time. Please send resume to CMDNPBA, 4500 North Hills Boulevard, North Little Rock, AR 72116.

Harlan Park Baptist Church in Conway is seeking

a **bi-vocational minister of music**, pursuing a blended worship style. Send resume with references to the church at 1895 Dave Ward Drive, Conway, AR 72034, or email to garynmitchell@hotmail.com.

Gosnell Baptist Church in Blytheville is seeking a **full-time music and youth minister**. Send resume to Gosnell Baptist Church, 603 Highway 181, Blytheville, AR 72315.

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

Central Baptist Association is receiving resumes for the **associational missionary** position. Resumes should be sent to Central Baptist Association, 928 W. South Street, Benton, AR 72015, Attn: Search Committee. Resumes will be accepted through July 3, 2012.

Mississippi County Baptist Association is accepting resumes for **associational missionary** position. Resumes should be sent to MCBA, P.O. Box 1104,

Blytheville, AR 72315, Attn: Search Committee and will be accepted through July 31, 2012.



Home for Sale in Little Rock

2-bedroom (large), plenty of closet space, 1 bath, living room, dining room, modern kitchen, laundry room, one-car garage with work area and lots of shelf space for storage, shaded brick patio, 6 feet fenced, nicely shaded back yard. Close to UALR, UAMS, I-630, shopping... recently painted, newly refinished hardwood floors. Refrigerator, washer, and dryer stay; very clean, move-in ready. \$82,900 - for sale by owner (Baptist family). Shown by appointment. 1201 S. Fillmore (corner lot - Fair Park area).

Please call Julie:
501-247-9813 for more information.



Sports Crusaders

Graham West and Logan Blackwood (left) take part in a drill during a Sports Crusaders camp held at First Baptist Church, Walnut Ridge, June 11-15. First Baptist Church, Norphlet, (above) also conducted a Sports Crusaders camp in June.



Kaleo summer ministry

Mentors pray over and commission students participating in the Student Summer Missions/Kaleo Arkansas Summer Ministry Associates (SSM/KASMA) program. The goal of SSM/KASMA is to provide students with mentored opportunities for leadership development, evangelism, discipleship and exploration and growth in their call to ministry.

Obituaries

Susan Marie Cunningham, 68, of Mountain Home, died June 14. Born in Camden, she married Thomas Jefferson Cunningham, pastor of Mountain Home Baptist Church, Mountain Home. She graduated from Ouachita Baptist University and went on to teach school in Texas and Arkansas. She directed numerous Bible schools and church events and served on 15 mission teams to Honduras. She was preceded in death by her father. She is survived by her husband of 46 years, her mother, two children, one sister, five grandchildren and other relatives and friends. Funeral services were held June 16 at First Baptist Church, Mountain Home, and burial took place at Kirby's Tucker Memorial Cemetery in Gassville. Memorials may be made to the Honduras Rice and Bean Ministry, c/o Mountain Home Baptist Church, 1960 Glenbriar Drive, Mountain Home, AR 72653.

Church life

Shepherd Hill Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, will host a pastor's retreat from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Aug. 20 with Stephen Davis, retired pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, as facilitator. For more information, call Harmony Baptist Association at 870-534-1021.

Watson Chapel Baptist Church, Pine Bluff, will host an evening women's conference for women of all ages 6:30-8:30 p.m. Aug. 24. Andrea Lennon of True Vine Ministry

will serve as speaker. No nursery will be provided. For more information, call Harmony Baptist Association at 870-534-1021.

First Baptist Church, Kingland, will host a youth rally 7-8:30 p.m. July 13. The event will include praise and worship, a message, fellowship, snacks and activities. RSVP to Rebecca McGee at beccarmcgee@yahoo.com.

First Baptist Church, Hatfield, will hold a homecoming celebration July 1. The worship service, which will begin at 11 a.m., will be a patriotic event recognizing community veterans, firemen and policemen. A potluck lunch will be served after the service.

On the move

James Matlock is serving as pastor on the staff of First Southern Baptist Church, Bearden.

Armand Janssen is retiring from the staff of Southside Baptist Church, Stuttgart, as traditional worship music leader.

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Anniversary

Anderson Chapel Baptist Church, Dumas, recently held its 85th anniversary homecoming celebration. Robert Sivils and Steve Tiner, both former pastors, spoke, and Cross Point Quartet performed at the event. Dewayne Tanton, associational missionary for Harmony Baptist Association, presented Anderson Chapel Pastor Thomas Lanthrip with a certificate in honor of the church's 85 years of service.

CHERYL E. TURNER



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ABCHomes is seeking **houseparent couples** for the **Baptist Home** in Monticello, **Boys Ranch** in Harrison and **Emergency Receiving Home** in

Judsonia. These **full-time positions** include salary, medical insurance, life insurance and paid leave. For information: Children's Home, contact Randy Luper 870.367.5358 or rluper@abchomes.org; Boys Ranch, contact Bill VonderMehden 870.741.5784 or bvondermehden@abchomes.org; Judsonia emergency shelter, contact Sean Culpepper 501.455.8554 or sculpepper@abchomes.org.





ABSC calendar

- **July 2-6: Camp Siloam Combined Week** – Arkansas Baptist Assembly, Siloam Springs
- **July 9-13: Camp Siloam Combined Week** – Arkansas Baptist Assembly, Siloam Springs
- **July 9-13: Collision** – Independence Baptist Encampment, Bethesda
- **July 12: One Day Evangelism Fellowship** – ABSC building, Little Rock
- **July 16-20: Camp Siloam Youth Only Week** – Arkansas Baptist Assembly, Siloam Springs
- **July 16-20: PraiseWorks** – Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
- **July 20-21: Mission Service Corps Retreat** – Camp Paron, Paron
- **July 23-27: Camp Siloam Children Only Week** – Arkansas Baptist Assembly, Siloam Springs
- **July 27-28: Wellspring ... Connecting Arkansas Women** – First Baptist Church, Little Rock

For more information on events, go to www.absc.org, or call 800-838-2272.

PraiseWorks art camp set for July 16-20

ARKADELPHIA – PraiseWorks, a student worship and arts camp, will be held at Ouachita Baptist University July 16-20. The camp is open to students who have completed grades 7-12 and gives participants the opportunity to be in the PraiseWorks choir or orchestra.

"This is an exciting opportunity for students to experience music, but

more importantly encourage them to deepen their worship, to grow in expressing that worship, and to fall in love with leading others to worship," said Larry Grayson, a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention leadership and worship team.

PraiseWorks provides a creative experience in order for students to gain hands-on experience in leading

praise worship.

"In a day when many churches are no longer providing training for future worshipers and worship leaders, this camp offers that experience," Grayson said.

PraiseWorks offers beginning instruction through advanced training. More information is available at www.absc.org/music.

Wellspring to be held July 27-28

WELLSPRING ... Connecting Arkansas Women, an annual conference sponsored by the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions support team, is set for July 27-28 at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

The conference is about women coming together for worship, fellowship and missions and ministry, according to Diane Parker, a member of the ABSC missions support team.

The registration deadline is July 15.

Participants will hear from a

number of women's leaders, special speakers and conference leaders on how to be like what Isaiah 58:11 calls "a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring."

Worship will be led by One Accord, and speakers

include Laura Macfarlan, Stacey Smith, Ginger Schultz and more.

Participants are encouraged to sign up for a ministry site project or attend specialized break-out sessions.

For more information, visit www.absc.org/women or call 501-376-4791.

Acts 1:8 One Day Mission Trip Oct. 6

THE ACTS 1:8 One Day Mission Trip, sponsored by the missions ministries team of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, is scheduled for Oct. 6.

The event, to be held in Tri County Baptist Association, will include prayer walking; children's activities, such as games and Bible stories; senior adult ministry; home repairs and painting; health clinics; sports camps; evangelism; yard work, including raking, mowing and trimming, and block parties.

For more information, call 800-838-2272, ext. 5150, or email Oleta Raines at oraines@absc.org.



Police and Fire Chaplain Basic Training

August 10-11
Central Baptist Church,
Magnolia
Friday, 10 a.m. - 8:15 p.m.
Saturday, 8 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.

For current and future police or fire chaplains who would like Basic Training, a 12-hour course that equips the chaplain with basic skills including: Police and Fire Families, Death Notification, Responding to A Crisis Situation, Suicide and much more.

A complete listing is online at www.absc.org/chaplaincyevents

Pre-registration is required. Class cost: \$15. Includes all program materials and two lunches.

For registration information, go to www.absc.org/chaplaincyevents or contact Pam at 800-838-2272 ext. 5249, or email prosinbaum@absc.org.

A ministry of the Cooperative Program and the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering

Poverty 101 seminar Aug. 18

THE ARKANSAS BAPTIST State Convention (ABSC) missions ministries team will host Poverty 101: Understanding and Ministering to Those Who Live in Poverty from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 18 at the ABSC building.

Mindy Jamison, a North American Mission Board consultant, will serve as conference leader. The con-

ference will bring understanding to generational poverty while examining the culture and mindset of those living in poverty. It will explore the most effective ways to minister to the impoverished.

Lunch will be provided.

To register, email oraines@absc.org. Registration deadline is Aug. 10.

Literacy training Aug. 3-4

SHERWOOD – A Literacy Missions Training Workshop is scheduled for Aug. 3-4 at Baring Cross Baptist Church, Sherwood. Train-

ing will begin at 2 p.m. Aug. 3 and will conclude the next day at 5 p.m. For more information, call 501-376-4791, ext. 5150.

One Day Evangelism Fellowship

(for vocational evangelists, music evangelists, youth communicators, women's ministry, marriage enrichment, drama and creative artists)

Thursday, July 12, 2012 | 10am - 3pm
lunch will be provided by the evangelism & church growth team

arkansas baptist state convention
10 remington dr., little rock, ar 72204

RSVP to Toby Talley by July 10th
ttalley@absc.org or 1-800-838-2272 ext 5222

This event is sponsored by the Vocational Evangelists Fellowship & the Evangelism & Church Growth Team

Truth or consequences

One of my favorite shows of all times was “Truth or Consequences.” The desire of the program was to give the contestant a trick question and demand an answer in a very short period of time. When the contestant could not answer the question in the time allotted, there were consequences. These consequences were often things that would make them feel humiliated or embarrassed but that did not lead to any kind of danger of punishment.

The concept of truth or consequences for the Israelites was quite different. There was a central truth. That truth was simple. Joshua had

challenged the people to do what was right. Joshua 24:20 (KJV) presents the truth when it says, “If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.”

Judges 2:11 (KJV) was another part of the truth. It says, “And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.” They chose to forsake the Lord who had brought them out of Egypt and to follow other gods and to deliberately provoke the Lord to anger. They had to pay the consequences.

This was no game for the people.

The consequences of not following the truth were serious, and they would not simply be a source of embarrassment, but a source of death. The anger of the Lord was against the people.

God is loving and kind to all those who obey the truth, but there are consequences to being deliberately rebellious. God delivered them into the hands of their enemies. There

was pain and suffering. The people would remember the truth and repent and cry to God for help. God would raise up judges who would help the people follow the truth. It was not long before they would be back doing the same thing.

We must follow the truth today or face the consequences. This is the simple truth. What will it be for us, Truth? Or consequences?

EXPLORE THE BIBLE JULY 8, 2012

Charles A. Collins
chaplain
Baptist Hospital, Little Rock

Scripture passage:
Judges 2:11-22

I believe every Christian can relate to Paul and the frustration he apparently feels as he writes Romans 7. We have all been frustrated that we just can't seem to live the life we so desperately want to live for Christ. He states in verse 15 how he finds himself doing the things he vowed not to do and yet it seems impossible at times for him to do what he knows he needs to do.

He knows the one dragging him

down in defeat is the old man – the one he was before he came to Christ. This new man in Christ wants to do so much to please the One who gave

His life for him. Every day seems to be filled with new battles that he often finds himself losing.

When we come to verse 24, it seems there is no hope in this battle. He states, “O wretched man that I am!” He sees him-

self as being miserable and unhappy

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE JULY 8, 2012

Tommy Miller
pastor

Union Valley Baptist, Beebe

Scripture passage:
Romans 7:20-8:9

Follow the leader

My wife and I served in Mexico with the International Mission Board for nearly 30 years.

Once as we were returning from stateside assignment, we had to stop in Mexico City to pick up a vehicle for our work. There was no problem with this except that we were serving in another state in Mexico about eight hours or so south of Mexico City and I had no idea how to get back on the road headed in the right direction after I picked up the vehicle.

When I arrived at the location where I was to pick it up, I asked the people who had taken me there to help me find the road back home.

They agreed to do so.

I got in the vehicle and began to follow them. As we were heading back, we were driving in the left-hand lane of a divided highway (three lanes in both directions) when the vehicle that I was following moved into the median, wanting to turn across traffic.

The driver found a small break in the traffic – you cannot appreciate this if you have never driven in Mexico City – and took advantage of it and literally floored the vehicle. I refused to be left behind even though it put me at risk.

I made some people angry, but I followed the vehicle in front of me

because that was my only hope of finding my way home.

Deborah was God's chosen leader. God told her what to do, and she told the people. She became their way back to God. Her advice and counsel was crucial.

It had to be followed if the people were to find their way back home. She told Barak what to do and how to do it. Obedient following was the

only way. He was willing to follow their leader, and God gave them the promised victory. Judges 5 is a song

of victory because the right leader had been followed.

It is no different today.

If we follow the wrong leader, then we must pay the consequences of our decision. May God give us the wisdom to find and follow leaders who will

lead us to personal and cooperate victories.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE JULY 15, 2012

Charles A. Collins
chaplain
Baptist Hospital, Little Rock

Scripture passages:
Judges 4:1-4, 6-8a, 10; 5:1-5, 9-11a

I have heard it said many times that if you had taken the Holy Spirit out of the early church, 80 percent of what took place then would have stopped. But, if we were to take the Holy Spirit out of the church today, 80 percent of what we do would continue. How is it that they had nothing in the way of resources compared to what we have

today and still seemed to accomplish so much more?

Could it be that they relied on the power of the Holy Spirit, while we many times rely on our own self-sufficiency? They knew where to turn when help was needed. The early church recognized its weaknesses.

We are told in Romans 8:26 the Holy Spirit helps us with our infirmities or weakness-

es. We all have weakness, but it is our weakness that can become our greatest strength. If I did not have weaknesses, then I would not need the power that only He can provide in my life. Instead of being ashamed of our weaknesses, we should rejoice as Paul did in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10. He rejoiced because he knew it was at those times he was resting on the power of God to accomplish what he was not capable of doing.

It is my weaknesses that drive me to my knees to cry out to God for help. The word “helpeth” means He comes along on the other side to help pick up the load. At those

Empowered

times in life when we are weak and we may not know what to pray for, then the Holy Spirit intercedes and prays for us.

We are told in verse 27 that He is praying that the will of God be carried out in our lives. That is the greatest prayer that could ever be prayed for you and me.

So when we find ourselves weak, it should drive us to our knees, and this is when we become powerful. It is because the Holy Spirit is praying and interceding for His plan to be carried out in us. This is where the power comes from, and it is the power we so desperately need.



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

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Pilots for Christ

Cessna 210 donated
to pilots ministry

PAGE 3

Faith Run

Church plans motorcycle
ride to benefit youth

PAGE 12

Crossover events impact New Orleans

PAGE 11



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