



Natasha Davis brushes a horse. Equine therapy is just one of the techniques W.A.R.P. 180 uses to help facilitate substance abuse recovery.

### 'Jesus is the answer'

## Ministry helps women turn lives around

Jessica Vanderpool  
Arkansas Baptist News

BATESVILLE - "A girl stuck a needle in my arm the very first time I ever used drugs," said Kristi Spurlin. It happened in November 2001, shortly after Spurlin graduated from Central Baptist College in Conway. She was a "Bible-thumping" daughter of a preacher with a "desire to be bad."

"Really it was a spirit of rebellion that just overcame me. And

what I thought was just going to be a dabble on the dark side wound up trapping me for seven years," she said, recounting, "My addiction took me down really fast and really hard due to the fact that I was an IV user right off the bat. I dabbled in and out of it for seven years before Christ finally got my attention."

Now Spurlin serves as program director for W.A.R.P. 180, a residential addiction recovery program in Batesville tailored specifically to women who are dealing with sub-

stance abuse and chemical dependency issues.

"W.A.R.P." stands for "Women's Addictions Resistance Project," and "180" refers to the 180-degree turn the staff hopes to see the women make in their lives.

Spurlin and her parents, Doc and Connie Spurlin, serve as the program's main staff.

Doc Spurlin, pastor of Parkview Baptist Church, Batesville, is a

See **W.A.R.P.** page 2

## Arkansan shares Christ at Olympics

PARAGOULD - An Arkansas Baptist minister from Paragould is among a number of Southern Baptists ministering during the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

"I get to go to the Olympics. How many people get to say that in their lifetime?" Doug Compton, member of East Side Baptist Church, Paragould, told the Jonesboro TV station, KAIT.

"It's not really about the events. It's really more about being able to share the gospel with people from literally all over the world that come to one location," he said. "I don't have to go to them. They come to me."

Compton is traveling with Action Ministries International Feb. 13-21 with a plan to share Jesus Christ with those gathered for the Olympics.

He and others will use special Bible pins as a way to open the door to the gospel.

Compton told the TV station he would tell people, "I want to give you the coolest and most exciting

See **OLYMPICS** page 2

### Christian Education Guide

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### OUR CHURCHES

## First Baptist, England, ups giving, sees God at work

Caleb Yarbrough  
Arkansas Baptist News

ENGLAND - Economic and cultural factors resulted in attendance dwindling at First Baptist Church, England, leaving the church a shell of its former self.

But the church was determined to not end up like many small-town churches in the United States and be swept under the rug of history.

The past several years have seen growth fueled in large part by Robby Sherman, the church's pastor who came in 2011, said Joey Adams, First

Baptist's chairman of the deacons.

According to Adams, First Baptist has experienced growth by sacrificially giving to the Lord and has adjusted its priorities in favor of seeking God's will together as the Body of Christ.

Shortly after Sherman came to the church, he set a goal for First Baptist to raise \$5,000 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. At the time, it seemed to be a large - and inconceivable - amount for the small,

rural church to raise. However, after hosting events such as a churchwide auction, a "noisy offering" for the church's children and a bake sale, they raised nearly \$9,000.

Bobby Jones, longtime member and Sunday school teacher at First Baptist, said the offering was a turning point for the church.

"People were not just buying cinnamon rolls. They were going to give either way," said Jones.

First Baptist has set a higher goal

for Lottie Moon every year since.

In 2012, the church's goal was \$10,000, and they gave more than \$20,000. In 2013, the goal was \$25,000, and they gave more than \$30,000.

The amounts are uncommon for a church that averages 100 in Sunday school and 150-175 in weekly worship.

Sherman said First Baptist's giving is simply one aspect of their transformation and a result of their decision to follow God in every as-

See **ENGLAND** page 3



Sherman



# Family Care Home in Jonesboro nears completion

JONESBORO – The 7,000-square-foot Family Care Home in Jonesboro that broke ground a little more than a year ago is right on track with construction, Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes) officials said.

James Barham, ABCHomes Jonesboro area director, said the new home for single-parent mothers and their children should be ready for business by June if everything continues according to plan.

"We are looking at opening in June with an ABCHomes Board of Trustees meeting and open house," said Barham.

"Already we are getting calls from local churches inquiring on behalf of single moms and their dependents."

Located at 3707 Harrisburg Road, Jonesboro, the Family Care Home

will house up to seven mothers and their children and will include live-in case managers. The home will assist single-parent mothers and their children through residential group care, mentoring, financial planning, teaching, counseling and referral to valuable community resources.

The home is being named in memory of the late A.H. "Buck" Rusher, formerly of Jonesboro, who was a faithful and generous supporter of ABCHomes. Central Baptist Church of Jonesboro donated the land to ABCHomes for the ministry.

ABCHomes staff will offer supportive counsel for every mother and child. Assistance will be provided in goal setting, budgeting, parenting, homemaking, spiritual growth and relationship building.

Barham said the need for this type ministry is great.



The Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries Family Care Home is set to open in June and will care for single mothers and their children.

"Several local ministries including Crisis Pregnancy Center (in Jonesboro) are looking forward to partnering with us," he said. "I believe this ministry will provide a safety net and place to start over for many single mothers who are struggling."

In addition to the future Jonesboro home, ABCHomes operates

three long-term residential care homes and three emergency receiving homes. Counseling services are provided in seven locations around the state.

For more information on the Family Care Home, email [sprather@abchomes.org](mailto:sprather@abchomes.org). To learn more about ABCHomes, go to [www.abchomes.org](http://www.abchomes.org).

## W.A.R.P.

*continued from page one*

certified prevention consultant with the Arkansas Prevention Certification Board, a licensed clinical pastoral counselor and a certified clinical trauma professional. In addition, he has a master's degree in counseling and a doctorate in psychology.

Spurlin is CEO of Friendship Outreach Inc., the organization under which W.A.R.P. 180 falls. He began Friendship Outreach in the 1980s as a crisis ministry for the whole family. He and his family resided in New York at the time, but they later moved to Arkansas where the organization is now incorporated.

"Since its inception, Friendship Outreach has provided support and resources for individuals and families in all 50 states and 14 countries," said Spurlin.

But when he watched his daughter struggle with addiction, he realized that, though there were plenty of addiction recovery programs for men, there were no good programs targeted specifically to women. He recognized that his family was already providing successful services in the area of addiction recovery to both men and women through Friendship Outreach – so he decided to take their experience and create a program just for women.

Programs often try to "plug women into a program made for men," Spurlin said.

"They don't take into consideration that women are different – not just as far as their gender, but chemical makeup, body composition, physiologically and anatomically, they are different. Emotionally and mentally, they are different. And so they need different things," he said.

Spurlin's plans for a women's program came to fruition in 2010 with

the opening of W.A.R.P. 180.

The 12-month program incorporates a variety of aspects, including medical counseling, drug counseling, exercise, craft classes, household chores, community service, equine therapy, Bible study and more.

There is no charge to the women for their stay, Doc Spurlin said, adding W.A.R.P. 180 does not receive state or federal funds and does not take insurance. They are completely donor-based, and "funding is a constant issue," he said.

He said they believe the only way to change one's life is to embrace Christ.



Kristi Spurlin

"We really are strong on saying, 'Jesus Christ doesn't have the answer. He is the answer,'" he said.

But at the same time, he explained they don't negate the role medicine can play in overcoming an addiction.

"A lot of faith-based groups say, 'Well, Jesus is the answer so we don't need all that other stuff.' ... So Jesus becomes a reason, then, for substandard and unprofessional treatment," Doc Spurlin said.

"We believe in faith, but we're practical as well," he continued. "God gave us those other tools as we need to use them so people can get the help they need. Jesus isn't a crutch or excuse, ... and He's not grounds for substandard, poor-quality treatment of people."

Kristi Spurlin said one of the key factors of the W.A.R.P. 180 program is its "family nature."

She said they even take the women to things like amusement parks and Christian concerts.

"Here they're not clients. Here – you can ask them – we're like sisters," she said. "We become a family unit here. And we protect each other like a family unit. When a new girl comes in here, she better tow the line."

Current W.A.R.P. 180 program participant Candy Russell agreed.

"The most important thing I like

about it is the family. It's something I've always prayed about and wanted – (true) friendship and all that," she said. "It was like a prayer being answered to me."

Kristi Spurlin said the reason the family nature of the program is important is "because a lot of times in addiction you shut out family, you betray yourself."

She noted that, during the course of an addiction, women often open themselves up to things like sexual assault and physical and mental abuse.

"And, at the time, we don't realize that we're putting ourselves in that position. So when it comes time to get clean, we have this guilt and just this (thought of), 'Can anybody ever love me again? Because of all the crap I've done, can they really care about me again?' And when you come into this program and you become incorporated into a family that loves you unconditionally and shows you – to the best of their ability – the love of Christ, it makes all the difference in the world because you begin to learn not only to love yourself again, but that other people can love you as well."

"I think the big key to our success



Doc Spurlin

is faith, family and fortitude," said Doc Spurlin. "We're consistent. We stick with it. We don't change. And the girls see that. They see how a healthy family functions. They see how my wife and I get along. They see how my daughter parents her child."

Women also benefit by being surrounded by a loving and supportive church: Parkview Baptist.

"They get to see the spiritual community and the physical family function the way God meant it to function, and I think that's a big part of the success. We practice what we preach, we live what we teach and the girls see that."

Spurlin summed up this hope for the women who go through the program: "We want our girls to build a strong relationship with Christ that's free of any encumbrances in their lives, any hindrances in their lives," he said.

"We want them to reunify with their families; we want them to get their babies back; we want them to be productive members of society and good, consistent witnesses for Christ."

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## OLYMPICS

*continued from page one*

pin at the Olympic Games. Can I tell you about it?" Then he said he would "tell the story behind those pins."

The mission of Compton and the team is to reach out to spectators, as well as local Russians. They also plan to spread the gospel to athletes and their families.

"We get to go to the USA House. We'll probably be at the USA House one or two days, de-



Compton

pending on how security is," he told KAIT.

Regarding security, Compton said he isn't concerned about threats of terrorism that have been so much a part of this year's games.

He told the TV station his faith is what calms his concern about safety at the Olympics.

"With that type of resistance, there is no telling what God wants to do when we get there," said Compton. "So I'll rest in knowing that He is in control. Am I worried? No. Am I cautious? Yes."



# Group helps heal scars from abortion

LITTLE ROCK – Pro-life advocates heard testimonies from women harmed by abortion at a recent press conference held immediately following the 36th annual Arkansas Right to Life March for Life.

The Arkansas Abortion Recovery press conference was held in the second-floor rotunda of the Capitol building Jan. 19. It was hosted by Concepts of Truth, a counseling center devoted to abortion recovery and prevention based in Wynne and featured multiple speakers who gave personal testimony of how abortion has affected their lives.

Millie Lace, founder and director of the National Helpline for Abortion Recovery, a ministry of Concepts of Truth, narrated the event.

“Christians have this in their past, and they are not telling anyone. It is a silence that needs to be broken. One of the reasons we do the press

conferences is because we want to share and bring awareness to the fact that we have been forgiven and the blood of Jesus Christ covers all sin, even the sin of abortion,” said Lace.

“We are not condoning abortion in any way, because it is a sin. But we know that He forgives. Our goal is to help these women heal,” she said.



Jackson

Linda Jackson, member of Barcelona Road Baptist Church, Hot Springs Village, and phone consultant for Concepts of Truth, shared her testimony.

Jackson said she had an abortion prior to the passing of Roe v. Wade after receiving advice from Planned Parenthood. In an abusive relationship, very ill and having suffered a miscarriage in the past, she decided to undergo what was deemed a “therapeutic abortion,” which was legal

under the exception protecting the “life of the mother.”

Jackson said for years following her decision, she was haunted by her abortion until she finally admitted it to another person and joined a post-abortion Bible study, through which God changed her life.

In her position at Concepts of Truth and by leading abortion recovery Bible studies, Jackson now counsels women who struggle with guilt and shame following an abortion.

Jackson also provides women considering abortion personal and practical information on how abortion destroys not only the life of an unborn child, but also of the mother who decides to undergo the procedure.

Following testimonies, Lace invited anyone whose life had been affected by abortion to place a rose in a basket in order to signify the life of a child that was taken because of abortion.

## ENGLAND

*continued from page one*

pect of their lives as a congregation.

“We began to learn how to dream and envision. Instead of doing what we had always done in the past, we began to look at what we could do in the future and where God could lead us,” he said. “It’s not like we are a big church. Everybody is just starting to get on the same page with the Lord and what He is wanting to do.”

Sherman said that when he came to First Baptist, he was afraid that because he was a “city boy” coming to a rural farming community it would make it difficult for him to connect with the congregation.

He quickly discovered that the church was open to change and that the work ethic and values of members aligned well with his own.

“These guys had seen so much change and transition in the industry of farming. They don’t change what they do in the field because something new comes along. They change because they see the value in what is put in front of them,” said Sherman.

“They (First Baptist) were not violent defenders of the status quo. They knew that some things needed to change for them to become what God wanted them to become,” he said.

David Nipps, worship minister at First Baptist, said Sherman was the “right person for the right time.”

“We certainly felt that God led this person here at this time to meet our needs. And I think God sent him here because we were something he needed also. ... We were looking for a vision, and he has a plan and a vision for our church,” said Nipps.

“I have never had a pastor work any harder than him. The guy has

got work ethic. He is like an old farmer or something. He gets up in the morning, works all day and goes into the night with you,” he said.

Nipps credited God with giving the congregation a much needed “attitude adjustment,” which allowed them to fully support the vision that Sherman cast upon his arrival at the church.

“Ten years ago we were not willing to change. We weren’t ready. I think God got us ready to make some of these changes,” said Nipps.

Sherman said most Arkansas Baptist churches are like First Baptist.

“I’m not different from many pastors. I think there are a lot better pastors, preachers and leaders than me, but it doesn’t matter who the pastor is. God has to do it,” he said.

Sherman added, “Ten years ago, they were unwilling to change. It didn’t matter who was here. When they got ready and were softened, that is when things happened.

“It doesn’t matter how much vision I cast if they are unwilling to follow,” he said.

Nipps said that the sight of their church and other churches losing members and becoming less effective at reaching their communities for Christ is what brought them to the point of being willing to change.

“The word that God has given us for the year is ‘chasing,’ chasing Him,” said Sherman. “When we get right with the Lord, God takes care of everything else. A church that is alive is attractive to people because they want to be part of something that is vibrant.”

“One of the things that fits farming communities all over the eastern delta is that we are in a shrinking town. This town was in its heyday in the 60s,” said Nipps.

“We have had people tell us, ‘You are never going to be the same. Your community is never going to be the same. Your church is never going to

be the same as it was 30 years ago,’” he said.

“We had this negativism in our community and in our own minds. We had to get back to the point where we realized that if God wants this thing to grow, He can grow it. But we can’t,” Nipps said. “That helped us. It was a stepping out on faith.”

Sherman said that First Baptist is no longer simply a “little church in a little town,” but a church that seeks to make a “global impact” for Jesus Christ.

“We have met with missionaries from China about partnering with them and putting our footprint there, from England, Ark.,” said Sherman. “We do missions to New Orleans; we do missions here; we do missions around the state. But we are now looking at putting our footprints in China as well.”

In addition to mission trips across Arkansas and beyond, First Baptist emphasizes mission work within the England community.

They have hosted “Trunk-or-Treats” during Halloween; rebuilt, strengthened and grown their once dying vacation Bible school program, and increased their focus on reaching families through a growing number of available Sunday school classes and renovated youth and children’s programs and events.

“It’s not about what we can do, but what God can do and what we ask of Him,” Sherman.

“I asked God several years ago to give me the world – to where within every five years before I retire that I could put my footprint to where I actually have the potential to impact the world, and for God to send me places where I could do things from.”

“I believe this church is catching that vision as well,” he said.

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## ABN Digest

*Stories of interest to Arkansas Baptists*

### US should sanction ‘persecuting’ nations

WASHINGTON – The U.S. should consider economic sanctions on countries where Christians endure persecution, torture and death to help ensure security here and abroad, a religious rights advocate told Congress Feb. 11, *The Washington Times* reported. Elliott Abrams of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom said a “case-by-case analysis” could be used in weighing sanctions, the newspaper reported.

### Federal judge strikes down gay marriage ban

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Kentucky must recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states, a federal judge ruled Feb. 12, striking down part of the state ban that he wrote treated “gay and lesbian persons differently in a way that demeans them.” In 23-page ruling, the Associated Press reported that U.S. District Judge John G. Heyburn II concluded that the government may define marriage and attach benefits to it, but cannot “impose a traditional or faith-based limitation” without a sufficient justification for it.

### Iran ready for battle with US and Israel

JERUSALEM – In the latest in a series of warnings against the U.S., Iran’s chief of staff Hassan Firouzabadi warned the Islamic republic’s foes that Iran is prepared for a “decisive battle” if attacked, *The Times of Israel* reported. “We are ready for the decisive battle with America and the Zionist regime (Israel),” Firouzabadi said Feb. 12. He also warned neighboring nations not to allow any attack to be launched on Iran from their soil.

### Mississippi still ranks as most religious state

PRINCETON, N.J. – Mississippi continued to be the most religious state in a recent Gallup poll. With 61 percent of its residents classified as very religious, Mississippi held on to its position as the most religious state, while Vermont, with 22 percent very religious residents, remained the least religious. The most religious states were in the South, except for Utah, while the least religious states were clustered in New England and the West. Arkansas was ranked as eighth most religious.

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

## The priority of prayer

I know few people who aren't advocates of prayer.

Scripture teaches us to pray. Jesus taught His disciples how to pray around the Lord's Prayer. Our pastors encourage us to pray. Our Southern Baptist leaders – such as Henry Blackaby at the recent evangelism conference – want us to understand the importance of prayer.

But how seriously do we really take prayer?

Sure, we pray over our meals and may say a prayer to the Lord as we start our day. But do we really pray?

There are evangelical voices in our country today who believe our country is in the mess it's in due to the lack of prayer.

In my own prayer life, I find it is essential that I keep a comprehensive list of people and needs to pray for.



### PRESSING On

Tim Yarbrough  
Phil. 3:14

For years, I have used what I call "ACTS" in prayer, which has been a great help to me in organizing my prayer life.

It's a simple formula: A is for "adoration," C is for "confession," T is for "thanksgiving" and S is for "supplication."

It is a model the staff of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association encourages. They

describe its components this way:

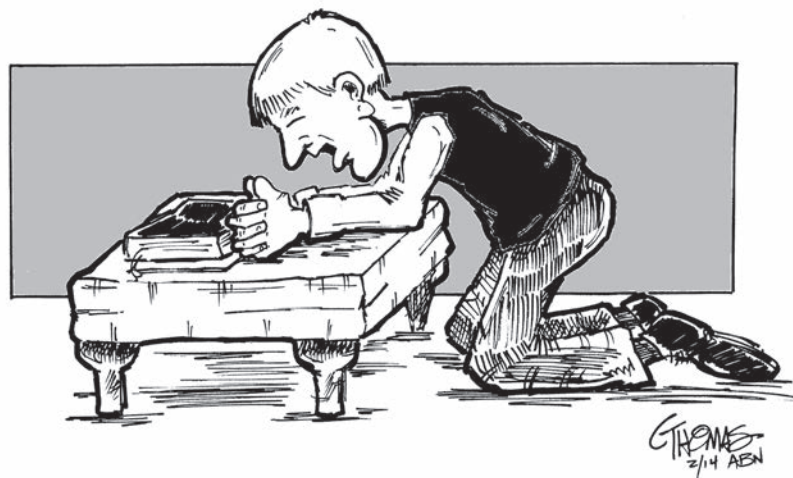
"Adoration means worship. We encourage you to begin your time of prayer by adoring and praising God.

"Confession, the next component, means agreeing with God about the things that you have done wrong.

"Thanksgiving basically means being thankful to God. Thank Him for His love, protection and provision just to name a few things.

Cartoon by Gary Thomas

### The one conversation that the NSA cannot hear.



"Supplication is the final component, and this means praying for your needs and for the needs of others, such as friends, family, your pastor, missionaries, government

leaders and persecuted Christians around the world."

No matter how we pray, the key of course, is to make it a priority today and every day of our lives!

## God's Story, Your Story

By Max Lucado, Zondervan Publishing, 2011 (first edition)

With use of modern Bible translations, his family's personal Christian practices and his church pastoring events, Max Lucado shows how God's story in Jesus became and continues to become alive when people truly turn to Him.

The chapter "You Know Satan's Next Move" is a great eye-opener for the tricks that devils

and demons use to divert and destroy Christian testimony and deeds. Another chapter describes how God's voice became real for people in the Bible and becomes just as real for people in our day and time.

Lucado describes the miraculous power of Jesus' death and atonement on the cross, using illustrations from biblical times, as

well as modern times – all equally touching.

The resurrection power of Christ, both in His first confrontations with people, and in present-day times, could not be more effectively described.

Our human weaknesses and tendencies to drift to self-sufficiencies – rather than to fully depend on God's supernatural power – are honestly and revealingly described.

The chapter "Power Moves In" begins with the unforgettable transformation of Peter "from wimp to warrior in 50 days." The author compares the birth of electric power for the masses and the lack of understanding people had to grasp the new "electric" asset they had with the role and power of the Holy Spirit in peoples' lives. A couple of very honest, yet difficult, personal ex-

periences of the author are given to show how we may need the Holy Spirit's personal guidance in our most down-to-earth living.

The spread of God's story in the Book of Acts is compared to the 90-pound golden retriever of Lucado and wife, Denalyn, and how the dog was trained to recognize their home's open and shut door system by a combination of signals to entrances and exits.

Paul and Silas had to learn about the closing and opening of doors by God in His guidance and directions to share His story. So also we must learn the same principles.

Another chapter describes Paul's early years – in vocational training, Scriptural teaching, acquisition of language skills and Roman citizenship – as a graphic illustration of the

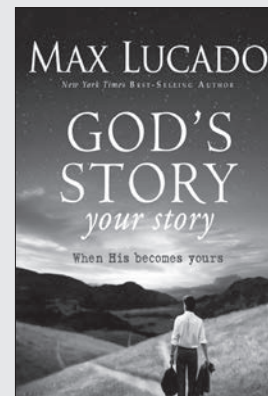
truths of the Bible verse Romans 8:28.

In closing chapters, Lucado writes about the Second Coming, the resurrection of believers and victories over disease and death. One moving story was about the

Lucado daughter, Sara, and her grandmother – Max Lucado's mother, Thelma – both graduating at the same time. At the moment Sara was receiving her high school diploma to the cheers of their family, her grandmother was graduating at the same moment – to glory in heaven! Seventy-six years separated the two family members, but

they were graduating at the same moment.

After Lucado's final chapter, another writer has a brief discussion and action guide for each chapter, should a person or group wish to follow it.



### BOOK REVIEW

George A. Peters Sr.  
Park Hill Baptist Church  
North Little Rock



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## Baptists Ask

*If God judges people based on their personal deeds (Deut. 24:16), why then did God have Joshua kill Achan's family for what Achan did (Josh. 7:24-26)?*

The Deuteronomy passage has to do with personal responsibility. Simply stated, children will not receive the penalty for their parents' sin, nor can parents receive punishment for what the children have done. Each person stands individually in God's judgment. This statement, similarly stated in Jeremiah 31:30 and Ezekiel



Gore

18:4, is used to counter a well-known adage of the day – "The fathers have eaten sour grapes; the children's teeth are set on edge."

The Joshua passage, however, differs from the Deuteronomy verse in that it refers to the subject of "herem ("to devote")." In Joshua 6, God commanded the Israelites to extract and destroy everything evil in Jericho. With the exception of Rahab and her family, everything was to be destroyed. Achan, however, took some of these devoted things for himself (Joshua 7). Not only was Achan inflicted with the evil, but he also inflicted the Israelite camp. Consequently, the Israelites could not take over the town of Ai, and some of the Israelites were killed (Josh. 7:1-5).

During Joshua's agonizing prayer, God instructed Joshua to find the one who inflicted this evil upon Israel. Probably through lot casting, the Israelites were filtered by tribe, clan, family and person. When Achan finally was chosen, he admitted to taking the devoted things. Achan's punishment was death by stoning. Because Achan inflicted the evil on his entire family (or they were equal partners in crime), the entire family and their belongings were also destroyed. Once they were "devoted" to God, the Israelites were able to continue in their conquest.

Although God judges each person individually, Achan's entire family was culpable of the theft at Jericho. Consequently, all of them were destroyed.

Ken Gore is chair of the department of Christian studies at Williams Baptist College in Walnut Ridge. Submit questions to [tim@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:tim@arkansasbaptist.org).

## PART TWO

# Is it child abuse to require children to attend church?

Parenting is no simple task. We must feed our children, clean them, mend them, help them, discipline them and direct them. In part one in this series (ABN, Jan. 23, 2014), I wrote against the allegation that it is child abuse to force children to attend church.

My first thought was simple: Church attendance is a healthy activity for anyone, including children. Here are two further thoughts on the issue.

First, parents have a divine obligation (according to Scripture) to protect, instruct and guide their children. Who would question parents for forcing their child to abstain from drugs? No one ever claims a child is being abused when forced to attend school (whether it be public, private or home). Atheists that claim obligatory church attendance is child abuse are assuming that the Christian faith is false. As atheist John F. Loftus writes in "Why I Became An Atheist," "All is vanity when you live a life of delusion. The Christian life is ultimately in vain, because it is built on a false hope." Thus, these bombastic parental claims come from a standpoint that is counter to the Christian worldview. Yet, as long as parents believe in the central tenets of the Christian faith, they have a responsibility to teach the faith to their children. Indeed, the primary responsibility of Christian parents is to teach their children the faith (Deut. 11:18-19).

Second, for a belief system to be abusive, the contents of that system must somehow be harmful. Until the atheist can show that the beliefs of Christianity are harmful, their complaints are little more than caterwauling to a full moon – annoying, yes, yet it does little to garner favor. Let's take the most sacred doctrine of the Christian faith – the Resurrection. Am I somehow causing my children undue psychological harm by

teaching them that Jesus literally, bodily arose from the grave? Will they suddenly believe that all who die will be raised three days later? It seems intuitively obvious that central doctrines of the Christian faith are not psychologically damaging. Until shown otherwise, allegations of child abuse are unwarranted.

Another indication of abuse would be to show that the activities mandated or encouraged by the belief system are damaging. So what kinds of activities are mandated within Christianity? Things like helping our neighbors, serving others, loving our enemies, giving ourselves for the betterment of the kingdom, abstaining from drunkenness and sexual immorality, avoiding slander and being responsible citizens. There are no Christian activities that cause

children – or anyone – harm. In fact, many nonbelievers agree with the ethical teachings of Christianity.

It's really quite simple: If parents do not take their faith seriously, their children will probably not take faith seriously. When Christ and His Church are important to parents, they will likely be important to the child. In fact, to use the word "force" in this context is somewhat misleading. It implies that parents are dragging their children kicking and screaming, but that just isn't the case. So, Christian parents need not be concerned by the atheists' rants. Parents that actively pursue Christ will likely have children that are spiritually healthy, led in the right direction, beneficial to the community and honoring to God.

*Editor's Note: This is the second and final installment of a two-part series. Chad Meeks is former youth minister of Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock, and current Ph.D. student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.*



## CHURCH ISSUES

Chad Meeks

## The nudges of a friend

I love seeing how my entire life is woven together with threads of little circumstances joining to create an incredible tapestry of God's handiwork.

It is even more precious to see the people God has used to guide me through His plan.

At the moment, I am specifically thinking of a woman God used to nudge me toward writing. It would be very inaccurate to say she is the reason I write today. God used many people and circumstances to bring me to this point. But, the persuasion of that one precious lady marked a moment of distinct action.

Lynn had been a recipient of some prayer update emails I sent out several times a week on behalf of some dear friends. When the family's immediate crisis passed and the emails became less frequent, Lynn approached me in church and said, "I'm so thankful that you don't have to send out those emails anymore, but I'm also sad. I love your writing! I would read anything you wrote!"

But she did not stop there. Over the next several months, she regularly asked if I had been writing. At the time, I had no idea where to begin. But even as time passed and Lynn and I lost touch, I could not rid myself of the memory of her words. I

began blogging a couple of years later, and God has been consistently been opening doors since then.

I do not share that story to brag on my writing. I still find myself amazed that there are people who

care to read my thoughts! But I do love to write, and my sweet sister in Christ saw that truth long before I realized it. God used her to give me the nudge I needed to discover and take action on that enjoyment.

Has God ever given you that sort of nudge? There are gifts and talents hidden in churches all around

this state, just waiting to be discovered and explored. And there are ladies like Lynn who see the hidden gifts and are bold enough to share their vision with us. But ultimately, we are responsible to take that vision and do something with it. Lynn could not make me write. She could not even tell me what to write about. I had to take her suggestion before the Lord and ask what He wanted me to do with it. I had to act.

If you have a Lynn in your life, don't dismiss what she has to say! Listen to her! You never know what delights might be

uncovered in your life by the nudge of a godly friend.

Ann Hibbard is a pastor's wife and author living in Almyra. Read her blog at [www.annhibbard.com](http://www.annhibbard.com).



## UNCOVERED DISH

Ann Hibbard





# ABF recognizes Moore's 20 years as president

LITTLE ROCK – David Moore, retiring president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, was recognized Feb. 6 for 20 years of service to the organization.

The surprise recognition of Moore came during the agency's quarterly board of trustees meeting. Moore received a gift and cake from staff and trustees presented by Jay Shell of Batesville, board chairman. Tim Dockery, Foundation general counsel, shared a brief history of accomplishments during Moore's tenure.

Harry Trulove is currently the longest tenured Foundation president at 20 years, but when Moore officially retires in the spring of 2015, he will have served 21 years. Shell read from a special advertisement honoring Moore that the Foundation had published in this edition of the *Arkansas Baptist News* (below).

In other action, the board:

- Heard a devotional from Greg Addison, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Cabot. Addison, a former attorney, explained that he understood the importance of words. Reading from Psalm 46:1, Addison said each word's meaning is underscoring how God is our very present help in time of trouble.

- Heard a report from Moore re-

porting that the Foundation completed 2013 with more than \$217 million under management. He shared an overview of the Foundation's liabilities with charitable gift annuities. Moore reported a liability of \$2.65 million with assets of \$4.76 million set aside to meet the liability.

- Heard a report from Dockery on the "gift tracker" amounts. The Foundation assisted in establishing nearly \$19 million in future gifts in 2013 and managed to receive more than \$7 million in matured gifts and donations, Dockery said.

- Were presented the Foundation investment committee report by Cathy Brandt, committee chairwoman. Brandt said 2013 should have helped people overcome "triskaidekaphobia," which is the fear of the number 13, as the year was very good for investments. She noted the Dow Jones industrial average was up 26 percent in 2013, its largest one-year growth since 1995.

- Reviewed the performance of the various common funds managed by the Foundation and heard a report from the investment committee concerning some of the tactical changes being made in the portfolios. The largest funds at the Foundation during 2013 earned 14.74 percent (Spending Plan Fund),



David Moore (center), retiring president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation, is honored during the agency's quarterly board of trustees meeting as Jay Shell, board chairman, (right) and other look on. Moore was recognized for 20 years of service to the organization.

14.27 percent (Total Return Fund), 3.56 percent (Balanced Fund) and 29.65 percent (Group Equity Fund). Bobby Thomas, institutional consultant and president-elect of the Foundation, said the five-year performance number for the largest fund (Spending Plan Fund) earned 12.16 percent annualized for the period since the recovery began.

- Were told by Thomas that since the Foundation's assets dropped less severely than most during the downturn of 2008, it is remarkable

that the recovery numbers look so strong. He pointed out that the Spending Plan Fund had, for the first time since the downturn, exceeded the amount needed to maintain the mission of preserving the purchasing power or contributions while paying out as much for ministry as possible. Thomas and Moore commented that this will be watched closely with the view of being able to increase the payout if possible.

- Welcomed its new member, Wendell Stratton of Stuttgart.

## Congratulations on 20 years!

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to congratulate David Moore on his 20th Anniversary as President of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation. Having had the pleasure of serving on the Board both before and during David's tenure, I am amazed at where his leadership under the guidance of our Lord Jesus has taken the Foundation.

David has led with vision, foresight, excellence and professionalism while showing grace, love and compassion toward many donors at times when they have been unable to care for their own needs. We have seen unprecedented growth and blessings during his time as President and are extremely thankful for his leadership for these 20 years.”

*Jay F. Shell, Chairman of the Board*

**W. David Moore**  
President, Arkansas Baptist Foundation



## Oliver new Union president

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP) – Union University trustees selected Samuel W. “Dub” Oliver as Union’s 16th president Feb. 10. Oliver comes to the post from the presidency of East Texas Baptist University.

Oliver succeeds David S. Dockery, who has served as Union’s president for the past 18 years.

“Dr. Oliver is a man of strong Christian conviction who is theologically informed, passionate about students and highly respectful of the work of faculty members,” said Norman Hill, chairman of Union’s trustees and chairman of the search committee that selected Oliver. “His skills as an administrator and educator build on Union’s already established reputation for academic excellence, and we are honored and thrilled by this appointment.”

“We are deeply humbled by this call to serve at Union University,”



Oliver

Oliver said. “I am hopeful and enthusiastic about working with the board of trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends of the university to extend, enhance and enlarge all that Union is – for the glory of God and for the good of humankind.”

Oliver said the list of things that attracted him to Union included Dockery. Oliver also cited his appreciation of Union’s mission and core values.

“The integration of faith, learning and living has had a transformative effect on my life,” he said, “and as I seek to live out my calling as an educator I believe that Christian higher education is where we can most influence and shape young people so that the kingdom of God may be enlarged.”

Dockery is the father of Tim Dockery, who serves as general counsel for the Arkansas Baptist Foundation.

## OBU counseling conf. Feb. 28

ARKADELPHIA – Ouachita Baptist University’s Pruet School of Christian Studies will co-host the fourth annual Conference on Christian Counseling Friday, Feb. 28, in Ouachita’s Walker Conference Center. The conference theme will focus on anxiety and related issues.

“I think anybody would recognize that there is a lot of anxiety in people’s lives these days, and we want to talk about ways of reducing and understanding anxiety better,” said event coordinator Bill Viser, associate professor of Christian ministry at Ouachita.

Ouachita partners with Henderson State University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary to bring in counseling professionals to teach large-group and breakout sessions throughout the conference.

Breakout sessions include “Dealing with Anxiety: Observations and Contributions from Scripture and the Christian Faith Traditions,”

“Reducing Your Anxiety through Self Care,” “Eight Steps to Controlling Anxiety in Your Life,” “Anxiety: Clinical Practice, Community Interventions and the Spiritual Factor,” “Cultural and Social Construct Influences on Anxiety and Individual Responses,” “A Non-Clinical Approach to the Treatment of Anxiety Disorders: Physical Fitness, Diet and Sleep Pattern Modification as an Alternative or Adjunct to Traditional Treatments,” “Calm in the Chaos,” “Co-Morbid Anxiety and Substance Use Disorders: Exception or Expectation?” and more.

“I want it to be an opportunity for professionals, whether they are nurses, licensed therapists, social workers, counselors or pastors, to come under one roof united together to learn skills that can translate into making someone’s life better and more manageable,” said Viser.

For registration information, visit [www.obu.edu/icconf](http://www.obu.edu/icconf).

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# Higher education options plentiful for Ark. Baptists

HIGHER EDUCATION is more necessary today than it has ever been. It is a prerequisite for many jobs and helpful in ministry. Not only are there more prospective students than there ever have been before, but those individuals have more educational options and decisions to make than any previous generation.

Prospective students range from high schoolers looking for a traditional four-year college experience after graduation, to busy stay-at-home mothers looking to complete their degree online, to working college graduates who feel called to the ministry and want to prepare themselves through attending seminary.

Whether seeking an undergraduate degree in biology or a theological degree from a Baptist seminary, Christians can grow their knowledge, marketability to future employers, personal walk with Christ and effectiveness in ministry through higher education.

## Christian colleges

*Christianity Today's* Diane Vescovi argues in the article "A College Education That Makes the Grade" that Christian colleges are gaining influence in America due to their focus on training young leaders and

providing a specialized and unique college experience.

Vescovi cites that statistics from the U.S. Department of Education show schools belonging to the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) experienced a 70 percent increase in enrollment between 1990 and 2004 – dwarfing the same statistic for state schools, 13 percent, during the same period.

These statistics show a growing value parents and students are placing in Christian higher education. But what exactly are the specific factors that are causing people to choose Christian colleges and universities over other private institutions and state schools?

Jim Long of *Christianity Today* writes in the article "Why I Chose a Christian College" that he chose to attend a Christian college for the following reasons: "in-depth Bible study," "incredible ministry opportunities," a "caring family of faith," a "Bible-centered perspective," and the ability to be "equipped for life."

"In those years, I came to see more clearly what life is all about – what it means to waste it and what it can mean to redeem it through service. When I enrolled at a Christian college, I'd felt it was the result of sweeping changes that took place in



Ouachita Baptist University students relax and visit in Evans Student Center prior to the start of spring semester classes in January. Photo by Kristen Barnard

my senior year of high school. I suppose I thought Christian college was the last of all those dominoes to fall – the last stage in a chain reaction of faith. I now know that it was only the beginning," Long writes.

Many Christian college graduates mentioned in the *Christianity Today* article "Streams of Salt and Light" would probably agree with Long that their experience of attending a Christian college had a large role in shaping who they are as people, both spiritually and within their everyday lives and careers.

One of the Christian college graduates the article mentions is Joshua Trent, a 2001 graduate of Union University, a Southern Baptist college in Jackson, Tenn.

Trent now works as a personnel staff advisor for the federal government. He said Union prepared him for the real world by teaching him the importance of a Christian worldview.

"A biblical worldview says all Christians should be full-time," said Trent in the article.

Deciding which college one wants to attend can be daunting. Even if a student decides he or she wants to attend a "Christian college," that is simply the first step in deciding what


school is right for him or her.

Trennis Henderson, vice president of communications at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, argues that "from a Baptist perspective, students who have an appreciation for Baptists' historic commitment to such principles as religious liberty, international missions and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ likely will feel both comfortable and challenged on a Baptist university campus."

"Bible courses, chapel services, campus ministry activities and opportunities for hands-on mission trips are among the many growth experiences available on most Baptist campuses," said Henderson.


However, Henderson cautioned that while Christian colleges can provide students with excellent ministry training, they are not exclusively for students wanting to enter vocational ministry.

"While many students at Baptist schools are preparing for career ministry opportunities, many others gain quality academic training in such diverse fields as business, education, fine arts, humanities, science and a host of other disciplines," said Henderson.



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### Seminary

For students who have already completed a degree from either a Christian, private or state college, and wish to pursue vocational ministry seminary is often the best next step in their educational journey.

The good news for Southern Baptists wanting to attend seminary is that the Southern Baptist Convention has one of the largest and strongest networks of seminaries in all of evangelical Christianity.

A portion of the financial resources given between the estimated 45,000 Southern Baptist churches throughout North America is given to support the six Southern Baptist seminaries (from West coast to East coast): Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, La.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C..

Part of the support provided by the giving of Southern Baptists through the Cooperative Program (CP) also goes to subsidize the cost of tuition and fees at the six seminaries in order to facilitate more called ministers to be able to attend.

While the six Baptist seminar-

ies are strategically located in order to facilitate theological education throughout the country, each of the seminaries offers varying degrees of extended education. Some offer on-line classes and satellite campus opportunities, making them even more accessible.

The connection between Arkansas Baptists and Southern Baptist seminaries is long-standing, as was evidenced in 2013 when Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) celebrated 20 years of partnership in

the form of SWBTS's "Little Rock extension."

The program has allowed ministers from across Arkansas to receive quality theological training while continuing to serve in their local churches and other ministry contexts.

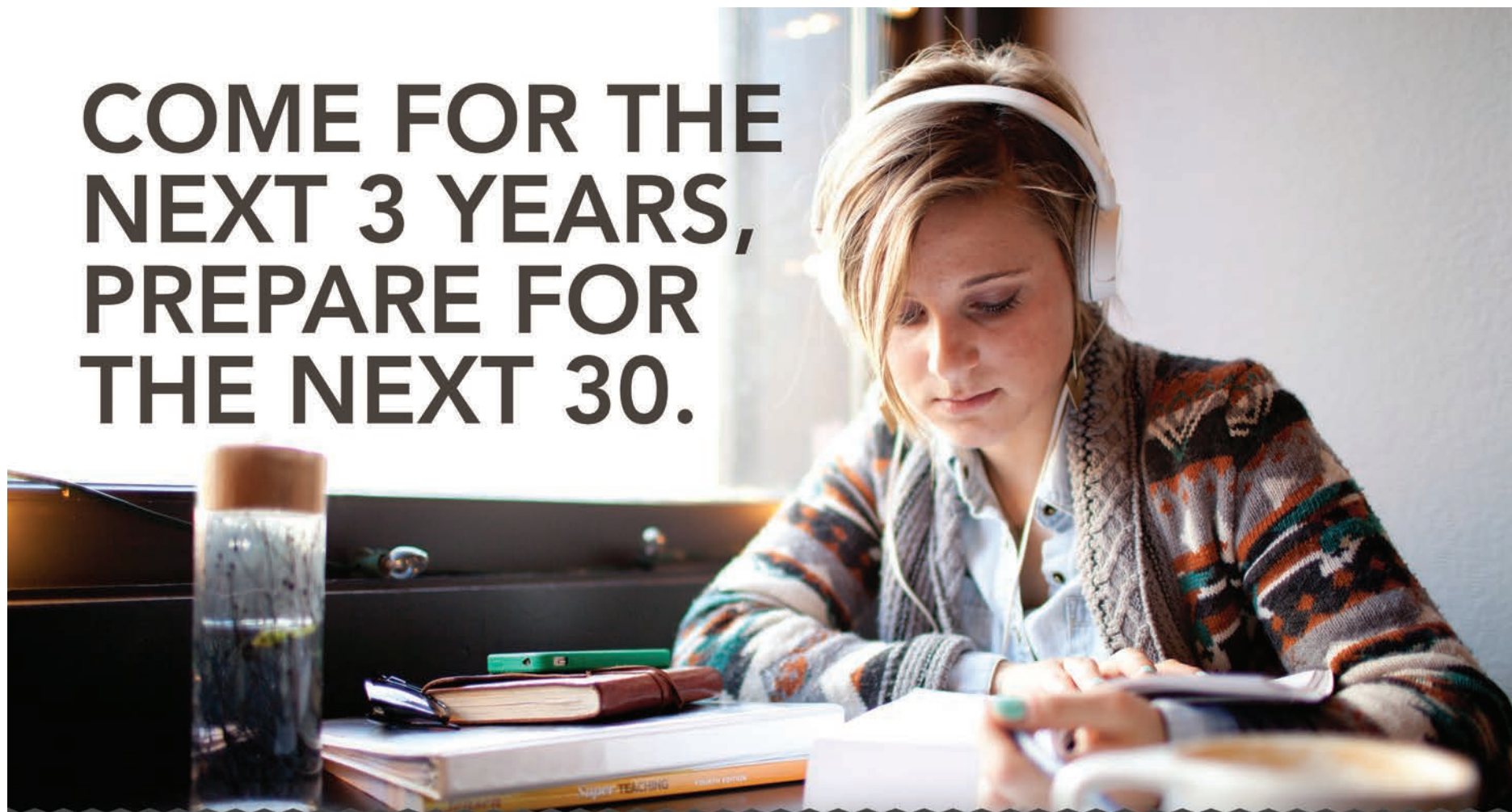


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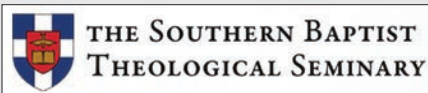
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## The 6 Southern Baptist seminaries



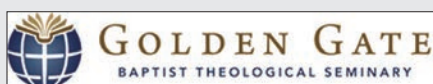
Established in 1859 in Greenville, S.C., on the campus of Furman University, it moved to Louisville, Ky., in 1877.



Established in 1908 on the campus of Baylor University, it moved to Fort Worth, Texas, in 1910.



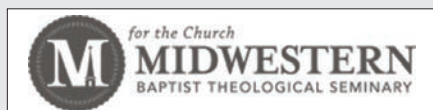
Established in 1917, it was the first seminary founded directly through convention action.



Established in 1944 in Oakland, Calif., it moved to Mill Valley in 1959.



Established in 1950 on the original campus of Wake Forest University, in Wake Forest, N.C.



Established in 1957 in Kansas City, Mo., it is the youngest of the six Baptist seminaries.

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## Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

## Florida church planter embraces legacy

Joe Conway

North American Mission Board

HOMESTEAD, Fla. – You could say Patrick Coats is a product of his spiritual legacy. But it's a legacy he attempted to elude – at least for a time.

A native of Miami, Coats was raised by his grandfather, Joe Coats, the first African-American pastor to affiliate with the Florida Baptist Convention in 1968. The elder Coats planted a church in a school building and saw it grow to 4,000 members.

"Hurricane Andrew destroyed the church building, but it did not destroy the church family," said Coats. "The last major project for my grandfather was rebuilding the church (facilities)."

Coats was never far from his grandfather, so he was constantly in church. When he was old enough, he began serving alongside his grandfather, first as a music minister. A degree in music education followed, and though Coats will say he is primarily a trumpeter, he can play an array of instruments, including drums.

"I was immersed in Southern Baptist life," said Coats. "I've been everything there is to be in church from a deacon to a preacher. But I ran from a specific call as lead pastor."

Coats ran to music and started a Christian rap group. Although it was a rebellious run, it was a mild one. He remained involved in church leadership but did not want to be a pastor. Coats' uncle, Joe Coats, started a church, tapping his nephew to serve as minister of music. After 10 years, his uncle had a new idea.

"In 2005, my uncle threw me into



North American Mission Board missionary Patrick Coats (far right of lefthand photo) greets a resident of the Homestead, Fla., area where he planted Kingdom Covenant Baptist Church. Joining Coats is his uncle, Joe (center), as they invite people to services at the church. Patrick Coats (righthand photo) serves in Miami, which is one of 32 Send North America cities the North American Mission Board is bringing special emphasis and resources to in its effort to help Southern Baptists start 15,000 new churches in 10 years. Half of NAMB's financial support comes from the Annie Armstrong offering.



the pulpit," said Coats. "That began a three-year journey of preaching, attending seminary and the realization that I had to embrace the call of a pastor to be obedient to my Lord."

Perhaps still testing the waters lightly, Coats moved his family to Homestead, Fla., and intended to start slow with his first church

plant. He planned a small Bible study.

"We began with a group of 14 at the first Bible

**FIRMLY PLANTED**

Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23

**ROOTED IN THE GOSPEL**

study preview," said Coats. "They all asked a question I wasn't prepared to answer: 'What are you going to do now?'"

Coats did the only thing he could think of and began looking for meeting space. In December 2009, he located a movie theater that allowed him to rent space for the Bible

study. The Bible study launch was set for New Year's Eve.

"Forty people showed up for the Bible study," said Coats. "The next week more came, and everyone wanted to have a worship service. That year we baptized 30 people. In 2011, we baptized 33. I backed into church planting."

Coats is one of six missionaries featured this year by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as part of its 2014 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions promotion campaign.

Kingdom Covenant Baptist Church was the result of Coats' accidental planting. He says the church is kingdom focused, connecting people with the gospel.

"God is up to something. You don't have to overthink it. Just do it," said Coats.

With connections through working on the Florida Baptist Convention's church planting team and through the NAMB church planting network, Coats continues to sharpen his planting skills. Kingdom Covenant is establishing city groups to create a culture of discipleship, and it is working in practical ways.

"Last year we met a woman raised as a Jehovah's Witness," said Coats. "She came to the services as a seeker. She sought me out after a service for clarification about what she heard. She eventually gave her life to Christ and is now a Bible study leader. She had the knowledge; she just needed to meet the Author."

"If you go to a city, you go as a

missionary. The church grows out of your missional living. It's not about making the right moves or reading the right books. It's disciple making and obedience."

Coats points to the example of his son's football team as evidence of effective missional living.

His son, Patrick Coats II, plays quarterback for South Miami Senior High School. As an involved parent, Coats got to know the team's head coach. At a team meal for the families, the coach asked Coats to give a blessing.

"From that I was able to share the gospel, and three players have given their lives to Christ and been baptized since," said Coats. "That's how church happens, in living. It's Acts 2:42."

Being named an Annie Armstrong week of prayer missionary was humbling to Coats. He has long known of the significance of the offering for North American missions.

"The Annie Armstrong offering is super important," said Coats. "We've benefited from training, resources and partnering churches who've come down and labored with us in the field. The best encouragement for a church planter is knowing he's not alone. Through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, other SBC (Southern Baptist Convention) churches are made aware of church planting and they come alongside the plant to help in a big way."

Joe Conway is a writer for the North American Mission Board.

## Charitable Giving Tip

## INTEREST-FREE LOANS

Did you realize that you can help your church by offering them an interest-free loan? This would allow your church to use or invest your capital. Terms of the loan can be very flexible – either paid back over a term certain or payable on demand (within a reasonable time) if needed by the donor. If not needed, this could even become a bequest to the church at death. The limit is \$250,000, but this little-known technique can allow taxpayers to remove earnings from taxable income while providing needed resources for church ministries.

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# Baptist attorney Stephen Holt dies at 46

LITTLE ROCK – James Stephen Holt, 46, of Little Rock, died Jan. 28. Holt, a deacon at Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, was diagnosed with Lyme disease and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease in July.

Holt graduated from Arkansas State University in 1989 and started his career as a banker in Jonesboro and eventually felt called to become a lawyer. Prior to his death, he prac-

ticed with the law firm of Rainwater, Holt & Sexton, P.A., a Little Rock law firm that he and two others founded.

Following law school in Little Rock, he took a college-level class on historical, biblical, cultural and strategic perspectives of the worldwide Christian movement and decided he needed to serve in missions now, rather than wait until he retired.

In lieu of this, he signed up for Immanuel Baptist Church's mis-

sion trip to Paraguay. There, he met and began his work with pastor Augusto Vega. With a passion for and a call to missions, he had served for the past several years as the Paraguay "GO" team leader for Immanuel Baptist Church.

At the time he



Holt

was diagnosed with ALS, Holt was working to raise funds to help plant a new church in Paraguay, a desire of his heart.

Preceded in death by his father, Holt is survived by his wife, Patience Pruitt Holt, his mother, a son and a daughter.

Funeral services were held Jan. 31 at Immanuel Baptist, followed by burial at Riverwood Memorial Gardens in Maumelle.

## On the move

Jacob Jones is serving on the staff of East Mount Zion Trinity Baptist Church, Clarksville, as minister of music and youth.

## Obituaries

Terry McCallister, 55, died Feb.



1. He is survived by his wife, Gwen McCallister, who serves as ministry assistant to the associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention. He is also survived by three sons and one grandson. He was a member of

Cross Road Baptist Church in Little Rock where he served as a deacon.

## Church life

Glendale Baptist Church, Booneville, will host its annual wild game banquet at 6 p.m. March 1. Jessie Greene, former youth minister for the church, will serve as guest speaker. The event will include a silent auction to benefit church missions. For more information and tickets, contact the church office at 479-675-2842.

The churches of Concord Baptist Association will sponsor the 2014 River Valley Rally, which is set to take place at 6 p.m. March 9 at First Baptist Church, Fort Smith. Archie Mason, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro and president

of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, will serve as guest speaker. For more information, contact the association at 479-646-2100.

Harmony Baptist Association will sponsor an expository preaching conference April 11-12 at First Baptist Church, Pine Bluff. Timothy Seal, academic vice president at

Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary will serve as guest speaker. For more information, contact the association at 870-534-1021.

## Email your church news to:

abn@arkansasbaptist.org  
or call 501-376-4791, ext. 5153

## Happy Birthday!

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

- ◆ **March 22:** Jared Carlin, OBU Box 3366, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Turkey.
- ◆ **March 30:** Rachel Wicker, OBU Box 4542, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Russia.

# Classifieds

## PASTOR

Cherry Street Baptist Church of Clarksville is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resume to Cherry Street Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 378, Clarksville, AR 72830 or email to cherrystbaptist@centurytel.net.

First Baptist Church, Dumas, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to First Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 200 East Waterman, Dumas, AR 71639 or email to FBCdumas@centurytel.net.

Kern Heights Baptist Church is seeking **full-time pastor**. Send resume to 822 N. 9th, De Queen, AR 71832, Attn: Pastor Search Committee or khbc@windstream.net.

Ridge View Baptist Church, Wynne, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resume to Ridge View Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 555, Wynne, AR 72396.

Sylamore Baptist, Mountain View, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Call 901-351-1040, email to kenw@mvtnet.net or mail resume to P.O. Box 1596, Mountain View, AR 72560.

First Baptist Church of Manila is seeking a **full-time pastor**. We are a two-service, mission-minded church. Please send resumes to calefinley@hotmail.com or they may also be sent to Manila First Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 1304, Manila, AR 72442.

Leachville Second Baptist is seeking **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resume to Leachville Second Baptist Church Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 565, Leachville, AR 72438.

Leonard Street Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor** for our church. Parsonage is provided. Please send resume to Leonard Street

Baptist Church, 625 Leonard Street, Hot Springs, AR 71913, Attn: Search Committee.

## OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Bayou Meto Baptist Church seeking a paid **part-time children's minister**. Great for a college student. Must be 21 years of age by summer. No particular education requirements. School year hours would consist of a 2-hour class on Sunday evenings, Bible drill competition and the occasional children's social event. Summer hours and events include 20 hours a week to include a Sunday evening class, Wednesday evening class and prep time. Two 40-hour weeks each summer for VBS and camp. Additional summer activities as needed. Please contact the church office at 501-988-1966 for additional information or send resume to Bayou Meto Baptist Church Children's Minister Position, 26200 Highway 107, Jacksonville, AR 72076.

Second Baptist Church in Monticello is prayerfully seeking a **full-time minister of worship and students**. Please send resumes to SBC, 1032 Old Warren Road, Monticello, AR 71655 or email to secondbaptist48@yahoo.com or kathesmith@att.net by Feb. 28, 2014. For questions, call 870-367-2459 or 870-723-3392.

Seeking **student pastor** to provide oversight, teaching and ministry to students from K-college. The First Baptist Church of Poteau is seeking a full-time staff member to work alongside a dedicated team of staff and volunteers to minister to the student population of our town. Poteau, located in the hills of southeastern Oklahoma, 25 miles east of Fort Smith, Ark., is a county seat town with an excellent school system and college. Send resume

to 300 North Witte, Poteau, OK 74953 or to poteaufbc@gmail.com.

The First Baptist Church of Mayflower is currently seeking a **full-time associate pastor of children/youth programs**. Send resume with cover letter to FBC Mayflower, Attn. Search Committee, P.O. Box 5, Mayflower, AR 72106. They can also be emailed to mayfbc@sbcglobal.net.

Graves Memorial Baptist Church in North Little Rock is prayerfully seeking a **youth minister and a worship leader. Part-time or full-time dual ministry**. Please send resumes to 4617 Oak Grove Road, North Little Rock, AR 72118 by Oct. 15. For job descriptions, 501-851-1493.

Located in one of the fastest-growing areas of central Arkansas, Wooster First Baptist is receiving resumes for a **full-time family pastor**. A detailed job description and prerequisites are located at www.WoosterFBC.org. If interested, send a resume with cover letter and references to Search Committee, P.O. Box 218, Wooster, AR 72181. Or email the above to pastor.pryor@hotmail.com. Receiving until Feb. 24.

Barcelona Road Baptist Church, Hot Springs Village, seeking **part-time organist** Wednesday and Sunday. Salary range: \$10,000 – \$11,000 for quality person. 501 922-0692, brbc3music@att.net.

First Baptist Church of Sherwood is seeking a **full-time associate pastor of music/worship**. Resumes received through March 7, 2014. Send to First Baptist Church, Music/Worship Search Committee, 701 Country Club Road, Sherwood, AR 72120 or email responsefbc@swbell.net.

Formosa Baptist in Clinton is prayerfully searching for a **part-time worship leader** who can lead a blended service. Please send resumes or

questions to billytreece@hotmail.com or Formosa Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1530, Clinton, AR 72031.

**Full-time position associational missionary** wanted for the Arkansas Valley Baptist Association located in the Delta of Arkansas, ministering to three counties that consist of 19 churches. Resumes will be accepted until March 1, 2014. We would ask that those who feel called to this area prayerfully send your resume to Attn: AM Search Committee, Arkansas Valley Baptist Association, P.O. Box 2766, West Helena, AR 72390 or email it to AORobbins4@sbcglobal.net.

First Baptist Church, Searcy, is looking for a **part-time music associate (or assistant, depending on experience)** to work with praise team vocalists and instrumentalists. Please send resume to Linda Stake at 105 S. Spring Street, Searcy, AR 72143 or linda@fbcsearcy.org.

**Youth leader** needed for Twin Lakes Baptist Church, Hot Springs. Contact John Johnston, pastor: 501-262-0015.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Available for revivals**, contact Lawrence Woodard: 479-292-0330 or P.O. Box 1331, Clarksville, AR 72830.

**Two condos for rent** in Destin, Fla. Two bedrooms, two baths, sleeps six. Completely furnished. 423-309-4422, lbrammer@charter.net.

Non-ministry opportunity, Whole Health Christian Values Technology Company seeks **mature business professionals for high-income opportunity**. Home-based office. Hands-on support and apprenticeship style training. For complete information, call Mike at 1-800-973-7851.



MARCH 2, 2014

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

## Seek wisdom's way

PROVERBS 1:1-19

"Proverbs" – or "parables" if one prefers – are defined as "short statements or words of wisdom." They are useful for instruction of righteous living and helpful to have success in life.

The Book of Proverbs is a series of snapshots that form a "video of life." When they are combined, they provide confidence that God is in control and that life can be lived with purpose. The person who lives out the principles of Proverbs is rewarded with an abundant and successful life. Proverbs begins and ends with the confidence that God is the controlling factor in life.

The author is identified as Solomon, son of David, king of Israel. Solomon got his wisdom from God. God had asked him what he wanted. He could just name it and it would be his (2 Chron. 1:7).

He chose wisdom (2 Chron. 1:10). He wanted God to give him understanding into life's issues and how life could be lived to the fullest.

In 1 Kings 3:9, he asked for the ability "to discern between good and bad." God rewarded him with "a wise and an understanding heart" (1 Kings 3:12).

Proverbs is proof that Solomon got what he asked for and much more.

Proverbs 1:1-7 defines the purpose and value of the Book of Proverbs. Verse 7 declares that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" – with "fear" meaning "respect."

Verses 8-19 are advice and counsel to young men. Those who are wise seek wisdom. They will listen to those who have sought and found

it for themselves. They will not associate with those who have ignored and neglected this wisdom.

One has to seek God's wisdom in order to find it.

This is not difficult, for wisdom cries out in the street clamoring for attention.

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me" (Prov. 8:17).



Charles A. Collins  
chaplain  
Baptist Hospital  
Little Rock

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

## Good work

GENESIS 1:28; 2:8-9, 15-17

My husband and I have four children. When they were just 3 and 4 years old, they wanted to help me when I was working around the house.

They would say, "Me help you, Mama?"

Or they would say, "I do it!"

They took towels to the linen closet or put their toys in their rooms. They thought they were helping, and they were, but they were also doing work.

We told them Jesus liked it when we helped each other. We would even sing the song "Whistle While You Work" from "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" (minus the whistling because my 3- and 4-year-olds couldn't whistle).

My husband and I had provided all they needed. They were well-fed, dressed and had a nice home with a room and toys just for them. They didn't have to work to receive these things; they found joy in the work anyway.

Genesis 1:28 relays God's com-

mand to "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."

Then we see in Genesis 2:8-9 that He planted a garden and caused food to grow, and not only was the food good to eat, but everything was pleasing in appearance.

Everything Adam needed was provided for him, yet God still equipped him to work the garden and watch over it.

We tend to think of work as a consequence of Adam's sin, but it isn't. Just as our children wanted to help when all their needs were met, Adam needed to work when all his needs were provided for.

God made us to work. Not only should we do work to provide for our families and those that need assistance, but also we should do work by telling the nations of the love of our God and the wonderful life He desires for them.



Julie Beavers  
church member  
Delta Baptist  
Pine Bluff

MARCH 9, 2014

EXPLORE THE BIBLE:

## Learn wisdom's benefits

PROVERBS 1:33; 3:5-12, 16, 20-22; 3:1-8

Proverbs is more than information to be learned, it is lessons to be lived. There are benefits to learning wisdom's ways that lead to life benefits. Learning is either a passive activity studying the life of another or an active activity of living. Both are beneficial and both are important.

Proverbs 2:1-4 has three "if" clauses. These are significant because the benefits of wisdom are only for those who make the correct "if" choice. These "if" statements are followed by a "then" clause that begins in verse 5. These verses are directed to the young person who uses the above passive method of learning. The right or wrong "if" will determine the rest of his life, whether it be positive or negative.

This "if" is no small matter. One's "then" can either be positive or negative. The result of the correct choices in early age will often negate the need to arrive at an older age and think thoughts such as, "If I had only done this when I had the chance," or, "If only I had not done

this when I really knew deep down that it was wrong."

There are benefits to living out what has been learned through a study of the Book of Proverbs, and each one of them is important. One for sure is found in Proverbs 3:5-6. There is this promise that trusting in the Lord is the assurance that one's life will be lived with expectation and hope and not anxiety. It is the result of knowing that, at any one moment, no one will literally or figuratively "pull the rug out from under you." It is the assurance that God is an active participant in the life of the individual.

The value of wisdom is heavenly direction and divine intervention for the person who seeks it. This is the life lived free from "ifs" because God has directed that life all along. If you "trust in the Lord with all thine heart ... lean not unto thine own understanding" and "in all thy ways acknowledge him," then "he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5-6, KJV).



Charles A. Collins  
chaplain  
Baptist Hospital  
Little Rock

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE:

## Who we work for

EPHESIANS 6:5-9

Recently, I was hired by a company to do unsupervised work for a few hours a week. The work isn't anything strenuous, nor does it cause me to use any critical thinking skills. It doesn't require interaction with people or, as I mentioned earlier, any supervision. I do the work that needs to be done and report my time to my supervisor.

Honesty is an integral element of this job. The person I replaced was not honest. He reported his hours worked without having worked them. He apparently wasn't familiar with Ephesians 6:6.

As I work, I'm in remembrance of this verse, which says, "Don't work only while being watched ... but as slaves of Christ, do God's will from your heart."

It seems that, as a churchgoer for all my life and a Christian for more than 30 years, these verses are in my DNA. I live by phrases like, "Obey your human masters," "Don't work only while being watched," "Serve with a good attitude," and "There is

no favoritism with Him."

I taught my children Ephesians 6:7 when they were very young. It says, "Serve with a good attitude, as to the Lord and not to men."

There are days I cook supper and don't want to. I don't do it with the correct attitude. My attitude needs to be to do it as if Jesus was coming to eat with us.

Although this passage seems to only apply to servants and masters – or for us today, employee and employers – it is also pertinent in our other relationships: husbands and wives, children and parents, any relationships we are in.

In Ephesians 6:5-9, Paul is speaking of authority and submission for all of us that have the Holy Spirit in our lives. Whether we are the submissive one in the relationship or the authority figure, we are to act in a pleasing manner. We should always be mindful that we need to do whatever our work is as to the Lord. People may not always be watching and noticing our work, but the Lord is.



Julie Beavers  
church member  
Delta Baptist  
Pine Bluff



# The 'spectacle' of the creation debate

By Chad Meeks

IT IS LIKELY that neither Bill Nye nor Ken Ham originally thought their creation debate would be such a spectacle. Within some circles, it had all of the hype and anticipation of a presidential debate. The Twitter universe was prepped and readied with the #creationdebate hashtag, and thousands gathered around their computers to watch the debate live.

On Tuesday night, Feb. 4, naturalistic evolutionary proponent "Bill Nye the Science Guy" and young-earth creationist Ken Ham, co-founder of Answers in Genesis, converged upon a stage in Kentucky to discuss this question: "Is creation a viable model of origins in today's modern scientific era?" Though the debate was labeled to be about the nature of creationism in modern science, it quickly turned into a discussion on the nature of science and the age of the earth.

One thing in which the observers can be assured – there are few debates that are as divisive and ferocious as a creation debate. According to a recent Gallup poll, 46 percent of Americans believe that God has created the universe within the last

10,000 years. Additionally, a LifeWay Research poll indicates that 64 percent of Protestant pastors strongly disagree that God used evolution to create people. The margins change when the topic turns to the age of the earth. Though it seems that a slight majority of Protestant pastors claim the earth is young, 43 percent of pastors surveyed believed the earth is old.

It was clear to all watching the Feb. 4 debate that both men start and end the debated question at different points. In fact, at times it seemed that the debaters were discussing two different topics. Ken Ham readily admits that his view on the age of the earth comes fundamentally

from his interpretation of creation passages in the Bible. Thus, he presented little scientific evidence in his defense. Nye, on the other hand, defends his naturalistic evolutionary stance based solely off of empirical scientific data. Thus, the debaters were using two completely different forms of criteria; even their definitions of "science" are different.

If Twitter and blogs are any indication, Nye fared much better in the debate, though both men had their issues. Ham did little to prove



his case scientifically (whatever that may mean) or biblically. In his opening presentation, he seemed more interested in proving that one can be a legitimate scientist while claiming the earth is 6,000-10,000 years old. Nye, likewise, was left punting to mystery when questioned on how matter can become conscious. Plus, he endorses a form of scientism that was shown philosophically unsound more than 70 years ago (see J.P. Moreland's "Christianity and the Nature of Science").

It seems safe to assume that the debate did little to advance the conversation. In fact, many within the theistic evolutionary world were loathed to hear Nye would debate Ham. On the blog God of Evolution, Tyler Francke wrote, "This is why the very act of debating a young-earth is a false pretext; it gives audiences the illusion that there is some valid controversy worthy of spirited argumentation, when, in reality, the participants are discussing a long-settled issue in which one side has simply refused to admit defeat."

Whatever the benefit of the Ham/Nye creation debate, one thing is sure: The gulf between young-earth creationism and evolutionary science is an unbridgeable chasm. The danger, of course, is that there is a false dichotomy established. It would be false to assume that Ham represents the only creation interpretation among conservative evangelicals, any variant of which is cast to the other side of the bluff or jettisoned into the chasm.

Conversely, those in Nye's camp falsely claim that science and the scientific method are the primary way of garnering truth about our world. Both views may, ultimately, do harm to the pursuit of truth. On the one hand, Christians risk equating a specific interpretation of Genesis 1 and 2 as a fundamental tenet of the gospel. On the other, naturalists risk indoctrinating a fallen world into believing that the scientific method is an infallible measure of truth.

Chad Meeks is former youth minister of Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock, and current Ph.D. student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

## ANALYSIS

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## Staff Wanted

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Homes and Family Ministries

■ **Housemother** for the Emergency Shelter in Paragould. This **part-time** position includes salary, medical insurance, life insurance and paid leave. For information, contact James Barham at 870.935.5134 or [jbarham@abchomes.org](mailto:jbarham@abchomes.org).

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CHILDREN'S HOMES

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First Baptist Church, Judsonia (SBC)  
Inquiries/resumes to  
[chuck-williams@att.net](mailto:chuck-williams@att.net)





## PROFILES IN FAITH

# 'Dedication to ministry' Harrison's calling

THE WORD "dedication" conjures up different images for different people. Some think of U.S. servicemen. Others think of Olympic athletes or world-class musicians. A number of Arkansas Baptists also exhibit dedication – a dedication to serving the Lord and His people.

One such man is Lawrence Harrison.

Harrison recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of his call to preach. He was a 13-year-old boy when he surrendered to God's call on Nov. 8, 1953, during the invitation time of the Sunday evening service at First Baptist Church, Smackover. And ever since then, that date has been a milestone for Harrison.

He did a little preaching here and there, but his first church staff position was as minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Norphlet, in 1959 while he was attending Ouachita Baptist College (now Ouachita Baptist University).

It was at Ouachita where he met his wife, Donna. Following college, he went to seminary in Fort Worth, where he served several churches before returning to Arkansas. Upon returning, he took his first pastorate, which was at First Baptist Church, Tillar, in 1968. He continued in the pastorate – oftentimes in a bi-vocational capacity – at a number of churches, including Parkview Baptist Church, El Dorado; First Baptist Church, Huttig; First Baptist Church, Norphlet, and Maple Avenue Baptist Church, Smackover. He retired from the active pastorate at the beginning of 2011 and is currently involved in supply and interim work. He recently completed an interim at Salem Baptist Church, Stephens.

He said there were times when things weren't going well, especially during seminary, and he considered getting out of the ministry.

"But I'd always have to go back to Nov. 8, 1953. That date was

just a nail driven in the wall that kept drawing me back to it, and I couldn't escape it," Harrison said.

"I wouldn't take anything for it," he added about pastoring. "I wouldn't do anything other than that."

He said something that has helped him through the tough times has been a strategy suggested to him by Don Moore, former executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, who was then serving as Harrison's youth pastor at First Baptist Church, Smackover.

"He was always after us kids to find a life's verse – one that will give you guiding light through your life under every circumstance. Well, I took him up on that, and I adopted Proverbs 3:5-6 as my life's verse," Harrison said, quoting the passage.

"I just can't emphasize too much how that verse has been that guid-

ing light out there."

He said having a life's verse "works for everybody, not just preachers."

"Lawrence is just so steady and so dependable," said Moore, who has been in the ministry himself for many years.

"He has a pastor's heart and is able to love the people and lead the people in very special ways."

Harrison and his wife have three children who have also been involved in ministry: Laurie Key, who previously served as children's director and

women's director at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock; Larry Harrison, who serves as worship pastor at Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas, and Lane Harrison, who planted and continues to pastor LifePoint Church, Ozark, Mo.



Harrison

## OBU trustee dies at 92

BOONEVILLE – Jeral Hampton, one of Ouachita Baptist University's longest serving trustees, died Feb. 3 at age 92.

Hampton, a 1943 graduate of Ouachita, served as a member of the Ouachita board of trustees for 32 years. He began his trustee service in 1964 and concluded his final term in 2003.

"Jeral Hampton loved the Lord, his family, work and Ouachita," said Ouachita President Rex Horne. "He was a tireless advocate for our university."

Hampton, a veteran of World War II and the Korean War, retired as a National Guard lieutenant colonel.



Hampton

A longtime member of First Baptist Church, Booneville, he served as a deacon, trustee and Sunday school teacher. He is survived by his son, John Taylor Hampton; daughter, Jane Woolley; four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Hampton's memorial service was held Feb. 5 at First Baptist Church, Booneville. Horne was one of the speakers at the service, reflecting on Hampton's Ouachita legacy.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Jeral and Betty Hampton Endowed Scholarship Fund at Ouachita Baptist University, 410 Ouachita St., Arkadelphia, AR 71998.



The Little River Baptist Association is hosting an Acts 1:8 event in Southwest Arkansas **Saturday April 26 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** Ministry activities will take place in the communities of Nashville, Mineral Springs, Dierks, Murfreesboro, and Lockesburg and will include:

- Prayer Walking
- Evangelism
- Block Parties
- Senior Adult Ministries
- Children's Fishing Derby
- Yard Work
- Prison Ministry
- Health Clinic

We are planning for and praying for between 500 and 1,000 workers to partner with us in impacting Southwest Arkansas for the glory of God! For more information, call **First Baptist Church, Nashville at 870-845-1404** or **Little River Baptist Association at 870-845-3236**, or mail this completed registration form with a \$10 fee to: **First Baptist Church, Nashville P.O. Box 339, Nashville, AR 71852.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_ Age (if Under 18) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Church You are Affiliated With \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Choices (Please List 3 from list above) 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_ 3) \_\_\_\_\_

## Modeling *for a Miracle*

I have no greater joy  
than to hear my children say  
walking in the faith.  
3 John 1:4

## ABCHomes Fashion Show & Dinner

6 p.m. dinner  
7 p.m. Fashion Show

March 7, 2014  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Little Rock

March 8, 2014  
Park Hill Baptist Church  
North Little Rock

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sprather@abchomes.org, or contact  
John Ross, 501-658-5293.

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

Volume 113 Number 4 February 20, 2014

# ABN

ARKANSAS BAPTIST NEWS

### W.A.R.P. 180

Pastor and his family  
help turn lives around

PAGE 1

### Winter Olympics

Ark. Baptist shares  
Christ in Sochi, Russia

PAGE 1



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### Master'Singers

Larry Grayson, Arkansas Master'Singers director and Arkansas Baptist State Convention leadership and worship team member, directs the Arkansas Master'Singers Festival of Song, which was held Feb. 6 at First Baptist Church, Cabot.

Find us on [facebook](#) and [twitter](#) as ArkBaptNews