



## ABN Digest

Stories of interest  
to Arkansas Baptists

### Grady Cothen, president of two SBC entities, dies

RIDGELAND, Miss. (BP) – Grady Cothen – the former chief executive of a state convention, a Southern Baptist university and two Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) entities – died May 19 at The Orchard retirement home in Ridgeland, Miss. He was 96.



Cothen

Among his service to Southern Baptists, Cothen was executive secretary of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California (1961-66), president of Oklahoma Baptist University (1966-70), president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1970-74) and president of the Baptist Sunday School Board (1974-1984). The California convention has since been renamed the California Southern Baptist Convention, and the Sunday School Board has become LifeWay Christian Resources.

An advocate of the moderate cause during the SBC's conservative resurgence, Cothen finished second to Atlanta pastor Charles Stanley in the 1984 SBC presidential election. The resurgence led Cothen to write two books, "What Happened to the Southern Baptist Convention?" in 1993, and "The New SBC: A Moderate Looks at Fundamentalism" in 1995.

Cothen was born in 1920 in Poplarville, Miss. He received an undergraduate degree from Mississippi College, a master of Christian training from New Orleans Seminary and three honorary doctorates. He pastored churches in Tennessee, Oklahoma and Alabama.

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# 2018 budget OK'd by ABSC Finance Comm.

LITTLE ROCK – The 2018 Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) unified Cooperative Program (CP) budget of \$21 million was approved unanimously by the ABSC Finance Committee May 16.

The 2018 budget is the first year of a new five-year budget formula, which increases the amount of CP dollars sent out of state to Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes from 43.77 percent to 45.82 percent by 2022. The 2018 budget increases the convention's percentage to 45.02 percent.

The increase in the amount of CP funds sent out of state includes 1.05 percent from ABSC Executive Board ministries, with the remainder coming from ABSC institutions and agencies for a total of 2.05 percent. The increase from the institutions and agencies amounts to a .2 percent increase to the SBC each year of the five-year budget formula period.

The percentage of what ABSC calls Out-of-State Missions is 2.58 percent for a total of 47.60 percent in 2018, projected to grow to 48.40 by 2022 under the new five-year formula. The Out-of-State Missions percentage includes funds allocated to ABSC to connect churches to SBC strategies, CP promotion and administration and the SBC Executive Committee.

ABSC programs and related entity budget allocations for 2018 are \$11,546,271 – which is 54.98 percent of the total

PHOENIX (BP) – Arkansas Baptists are among those nominated to various Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) committees and boards.

Named by SBC President Steve Gaines, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., to serve on the Committee on Committees are Greg Addison, a member of First Baptist Church, Cabot, and associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Jay Shell, a Batesville attorney and member of West Baptist Church, Batesville.

The Committee on Com-

2018 Unified Cooperative Program Budget			
Designated Area		2018 Budget	% of Budget
Arkansas Baptist State Convention	Executive Board Programs	\$6,264,502	29.83%
	Camp Siloam	\$240,146	1.14%
	Children's Homes and Family Ministries	\$552,913	2.63%
	Arkansas Baptist Foundation	\$323,677	1.54%
	Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine	\$256,521	1.22%
	Christian Higher Education	\$3,908,512	18.61%
	<i>Ouachita Baptist University</i>	\$2,947,852	14.04%
	<i>Williams Baptist College</i>	\$960,660	4.57%
	<b>TOTAL: ARKANSAS BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION</b>	<b>\$11,546,271</b>	<b>54.98%</b>
Southern Baptist Convention	International Mission Board	\$4,765,625	22.69%
	North American Mission Board	\$2,154,505	10.26%
	Theological Education Ministries	\$2,094,946	9.98%
	Christian Ethics & Religious Liberty Ministries	\$155,987	0.74%
	Facilitating Ministries (SBC Exec. Comm. Expenses)	\$282,666	1.35%
<b>TOTAL: SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION</b>	<b>\$9,453,729</b>	<b>45.02%</b>	
Total Budget	<b>TOTAL: UNIFIED COOPERATIVE PROGRAM BUDGET</b>	<b>2018</b> CP 45.02% Out of State 2.58% Total Out of State 47.60%	<b>2022</b> CP 45.82% Out of State 2.58% Total Out of State 48.40%
		<b>\$21,000,000</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

\* Source: Arkansas Baptist State Convention

CP budget (For individual agency allocations, see related table on this page).

CP funds received in excess of the annual budgeted amount will be split 50/50 between the International Mission Board and ABSC at the end of the fiscal year, and distributed to each state entity based on the established budget formula.

The Finance Committee recommendation will be voted on by the ABSC Executive Board on Aug. 15, before being sent to messengers for consideration at the convention annual meeting Nov. 7-8 at First Baptist Church

in Russellville.

If approved by messengers, the ABSC will join 23 state conventions in either achieving or moving closer to a historic 50/50 split in the portion of its CP receipts given to SBC missions and ministries versus what it keeps in the state.

#### Additional reports

In other reports, the board:

– Heard an "executive directions" report from J.D. "Sonny" Tucker, ABSC executive director.

– Heard a testimony from Lauren Smith-Gilleran, who went on a spring break mission trip through the Baptist

Student Ministry at Henderson State University.

– Heard a Arkansas flood relief report from Randy Garrett, ABSC disaster relief director.

– Heard a Terminated Pastor/Staff Assistance Committee report from Ed Simpson, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Little Rock. Simpson said from May 1, 2016, through April 30 of this year, nine ministers received one-time assistance totaling \$10,800.00, and one minister received assistance of up to four months in the amount of \$1,498.14, for a total amount of assistance provided of \$12,298.14.

## Ark. Baptists named to committees, boards

committees will assemble in Phoenix just prior to the SBC's June 13-14 annual meeting to nominate members of the Committee on Nominations who, in 2018, will nominate trustees for the boards of SBC entities. The Committee on Committees has 68 members, two from each of the 34 states and regions qualified for representation on boards of SBC entities.

#### SBC committees and boards

Named to the SBC Credentials Committee to serve in Phoenix are Chris Johnson, senior pastor, First Baptist

Church, Van Buren, and Stephen Martin, community pastor, University Baptist Church, Fayetteville.

Named to the SBC Tellers Committee to serve in Phoenix are Mike Manning, associational missionary, Harmony Baptist Association, Pine Bluff, and his wife, Leslie Manning; John Mueller, discipleship and shepherding pastor, University Baptist Church, Fayetteville, and Brad Wheeler, senior pastor, University Baptist Church, Fayetteville.

Additionally, nominees to serve on the SBC Executive Committee, the four denomi-

national boards – International Mission Board, North American Mission Board (NAMB), LifeWay Christian Resources, and GuideStone Financial Resources, – the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC), the six seminaries, and the Committee on Order of Business have been selected by the 2017 SBC Committee on Nominations.

The nominees will serve if elected by the messengers to the annual meeting of the SBC in Phoenix.

NAMB – Nominated for a

See **NAMED** page 7



Send attendees worship during the church planting and mission conference held May 19-20 in Frisco, Texas, near Dallas. *North American Mission Board photo*

## Send challenge: 'Play a part in God's mission'

FRISCO, Texas – “Limitless opportunities abound” to spread the gospel around the globe, and it is our responsibility to be a part of a God’s mission “at a time such as this,” David Platt, president of the International Mission Board (IMB), told Send Conference attendees May 19.

Platt was one of numerous speakers who challenged attendees to examine and redefine their lives on mission at the Send Conference sponsored by the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and the IMB May 19-20 in the Dr. Pepper Arena.

More than 4,000 people, from all states and three continents, attended the sold-out conference about 30 miles north of Dallas in Frisco, Texas.

“God has put us in this place for this time for a reason,” Platt told attendees May 19, adding, “God has given every one of us a part to play to accomplish His purposes.”

Preaching from Esther 4:13-14, Platt told attendees, “God is sovereignly orchestrating all of human history for His purposes.” He said in spite of obstacles to sharing the gospel around the globe, “God will not allow His people to be destroyed.”

“Esther teaches us that God has the whole thing rigged!” said Platt to the applause of the crowd.

“Nothing is outside of God’s sovereignty,” said Platt.

“Think about all the details of your life; nothing is by accident.”

Secondly, Platt said that we live where we live, around the friends we know and our neighbors, for a reason.



Platt

“God has sovereignly put you in their lives for His purpose. The purpose of God is playing out in our front yards, in our offices ... for such a time as this.”

It is unfortunate that so many across the globe “haven’t heard the good news that God loves them, that eternal life is available to all who trust Him,” Platt said, adding that we can change that by actively playing a part in God’s mission.

“However, it’s filled with risk,” he said, illustrating with a story about the murder of the parents of a young girl who had accepted Christ in a closed country.

“Unreached people are unreached for a reason,” said Platt. “They are hard to reach.”

The Send theme, Redefine, brought church revitalizer John Herring of First Baptist Church in Prosper, Texas, back to the conference after attending the first one in Long Beach, Calif., this past February. This time, Herring brought 20 church members to Dallas for two days of biblical teaching and next steps.

“The conference was encouraging and refreshing for us personally, and it was incredibly helpful for us in our

work at First Prosper,” Herring said. “We talk a lot about Jesus’ mission at our church – that we are called to be sent. Send helped us refocus on that mission and put feet to it.”

Send included worship led by Austin Stone Worship, Thomas Keys III and a concert by Crowder, and main sessions and breakouts with 30 topics addressing church planting.

### Ark. Baptists attend Send

NAMB organizers said the following Arkansas churches and associations were registered for the Send Conference: Bear Creek Springs, Harrison; Brookland Baptist Church, Brookland; Central

Baptist Association; Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro; Conway Baptist Collegiate Ministry; Cross Church, Springdale; Crossgate Church, Hot Springs; Deaf Fellowship Church, Little Rock; First Baptist Church, London; First Baptist Church, Siloam Springs; First Baptist Church, Rogers; Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock; Grace Point Church, Bentonville; Highland Drive Baptist Church, Jonesboro; Immanuel Baptist Church, Sheridan; Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Benton; Second Baptist Church, Jacksonville; Valley Baptist Church, Searcy, and Verge Church, Jonesboro.



Crowder, a band fronted by David Crowder, performs at the end of the first day of Send, a church planting and mission conference held May 19-20 in Frisco, Texas, near Dallas. The conference, which was co-sponsored by the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board, attracted about 4,000 registrants, including numerous churches and associations in Arkansas. *Photo by Tim Yarbrough*

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### NAMB responds to suit by former state exec.

ABERDEEN, Miss. (BP) – The North American Mission Board (NAMB) has filed an official response to a lawsuit by former Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware (BCMD) executive director Will McRaney, who alleges NAMB wrongly interfered with his separation from the BCMD in 2015, engaged in “slander and/or libel” and attempted to interfere with his speaking engagements.

NAMB’s May 18 filing with a U.S. district court in Aberdeen, Miss., acknowledged notifying the BCMD in late 2014 of its intent to terminate an evangelism and church planting partnership with the convention, alleging the BCMD “became a dysfunctional and difficult ministry partner” during McRaney’s tenure. However, NAMB denied interfering with McRaney’s employment situation or any of his other business dealings and asked for dismissal of the suit.

The lawsuit seeking \$7.7 million in damages was filed in Mississippi state district but moved to a federal district court in northern Mississippi at NAMB’s request. According to NAMB’s Notice of Removal, federal law permits NAMB to have the case removed from state court because the plaintiff and defendant are residents of different states and the amount of money at issue exceeds \$75,000.

NAMB said in a statement, “After [McRaney] rejected or ignored several offers to meet and discuss these matters biblically, we regret that Dr. McRaney has chosen to involve the courts, however, since he has chosen this venue, we will be good stewards of NAMB’s resources and defend the case vigorously.”

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# Editorial & Opinion

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

1 Peter 3:15 (NIV)

## When floodwaters rise, we look to God ... and DR

Not long after our family moved across the country to Georgia in 2002, where I was starting a new phase of ministry at the North American Mission Board, our basement flooded due to an unfortunate accident.

While I grew up less than 12 miles from the mighty Mississippi River, I had

never experienced the aftermath of flooding until we came home to find about 3-4 inches of water in our basement.

Within hours of the water going down, the smells began. At first, it was tolerable, but in only a day or two, the dampness and the smell of

mildew began to overtake the upper levels of our house.

Fortunately, our insurance company got a cleanup crew out quickly to dry things out and to help us get rid of boxes, furniture and other items ruined by the water.

Even at that, it was months before our house got back to normal.

As I watched recent reports of flooding in Arkansas, and the catastrophic levee breakage in Pocahontas, I thought about our basement and what a few inches of water can do to a house.

But fortunately for many residents displaced by recent flooding, Arkansas Baptist

disaster relief (DR) volunteers were there to help – providing needed manpower and hope in the name of Jesus Christ.

When physical floodwaters overtake us, I can't help but think of the promise of God in Isaiah 43:2 (ESV), which has brought comfort to millions through the ages:

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you."

Indeed, though life can overwhelm us at times, it often can be the care and comfort of the soldiers of the Cross who bring physical and

spiritual healing.

After all, as we saw all too vividly in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, it is when people are hurting that they look for a higher authority to provide comfort, purpose and direction to their lives.

Southern Baptist DR ministry has grown immensely since 1967 when a handful of Texas Baptists responded following Hurricane Beulah.

Today, a plethora of training is available to the average Baptist willing to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Training now includes chainsaw, communications, CPR, feeding, flood recovery, sharing your faith (deployment evangelism) and shower/laundry, among others.

For training dates near you, check with your local association or visit [abs.org/ministries/disasterrelief](http://abs.org/ministries/disasterrelief).

Consider becoming a DR volunteer, and you could be the next best thing to heaven by bringing "a cup of cold water in Jesus' name."

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



### Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

### Guest Columnist

## Christian inequality

Marriage equality. Political equality. Equal opportunity. Equal pay for equal work. We use the word, "equality," so often we may not realize it can mean different things to different people at different times.

Sometimes the slogans even obscure the meaning: After all, "marriage equality" means "gay marriage" to its advocates. "Political equality" may mean equal recognition before the law or something else altogether. Precisely because there's so much confusion about the word, Christians should be much more thoughtful than they usually

are about what kind of equality they adopt, espouse and embrace. Indeed, a healthy dose of Christian inequality is appropriate for these egalitarian times.

Not every kind of equality is compatible with the Christian

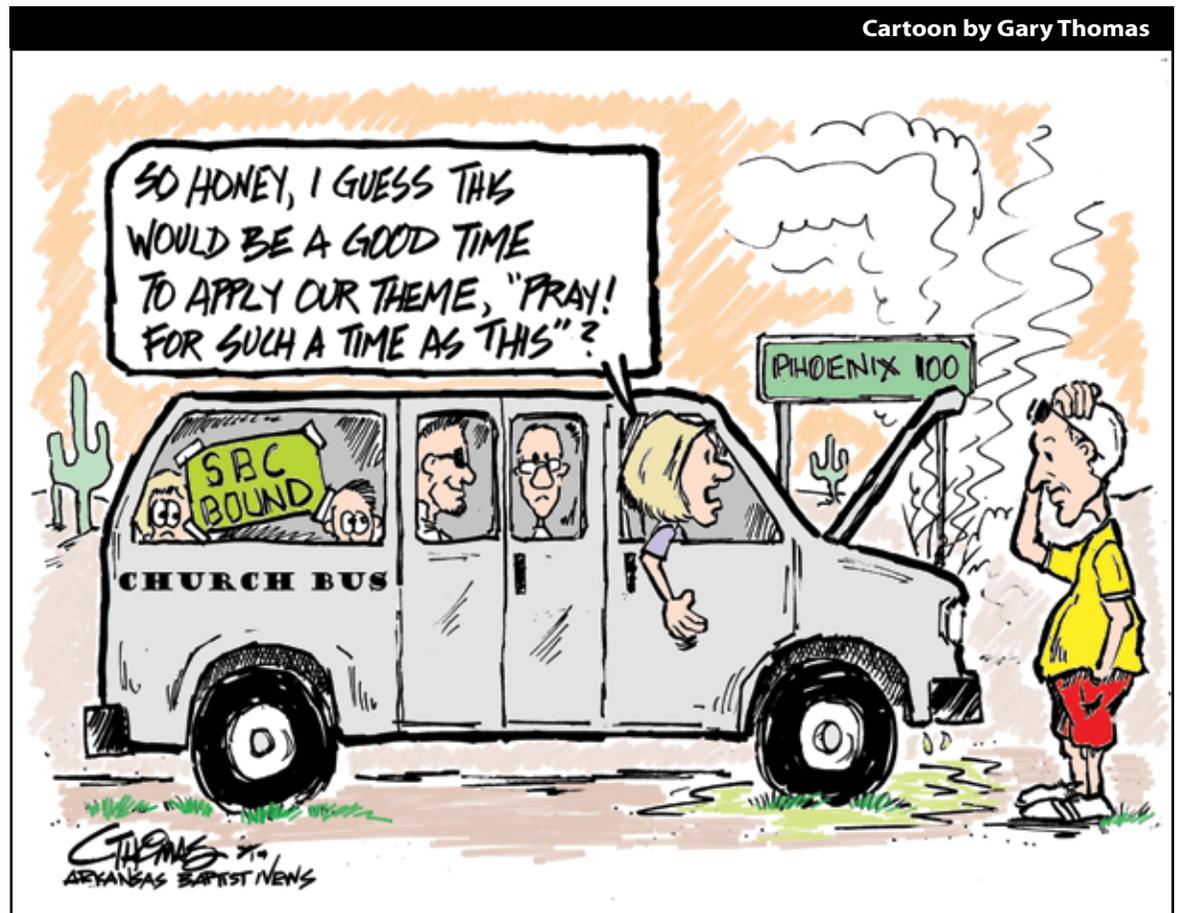
faith. Sound ridiculous? Think again: Take, for example, a single chapter in the New Testament: Matthew 25. There, Jesus offered the parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the ten talents, and a vision of the Son of Man coming in glory to separate the sheep from the goats. One

See **INEQUALITY** page 6



### Viewpoint

James Bruce



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Advertising: [ads@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:ads@arkansasbaptist.org)  
Phone 501-376-4791, ext. 5161

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## Can you explain the peculiar Psalm 133 for me?



### Baptists Ask

Ken Gore

While the imagery of Psalm 133 might seem a bit strange, a careful reading will provide a marvelous message for today.

The writer declared that it is “good and pleasant” when God’s people live in unity (Ps. 133:1, NIV). He described this unity in two ways. First, it’s like fine oil that is placed on the head. This would be a thick, expensive oil, which slowly, gently flowed down the person, all the way to the robe collar. Because he noted Aaron’s name, he described the anointing of priests found in Exodus 29. This occasion is a lovely picture of harmony and peace.

Second, he compared it to the thick dew of Hermon. The Hermon mountain range is in north-eastern Palestine, and its peak rises about 9,000 feet high. In the “fog lift” phase of the day, the dew can soak residents. Such a drenched feeling could spread all the way to the Temple at Mount Zion, when God’s people were living together in unity. These two analogies depict the closeness, purity and righteousness that he felt in his life with other believers.

The last part of the text explains the vitality of this unity. In it, the “Lord has appointed the blessing – life forevermore” (Ps. 133:3, NIV). Having great communion with one another in the name of God is a wonderful slice of heaven. It is a joy.

Psalm 133 is part of the larger “Songs of Ascent” (Psalms 120-134), which depict worshipers who gather at Mount Zion and ascend to the Temple.

Individuals can’t have a relationship unless they create one. Thriving relationships are active, not passive, and they take involvement from both sides. When they are done well, they create unity and peace. Psalm 133 shows that God blesses the unified fellowship of His followers, today and forever.

Ken Gore is professor of biblical studies at Dallas Baptist University. Baptists Ask is reader-driven. To submit a question, write Baptists Ask, 10 Remington Drive, Little Rock, AR 72204, or email Tim Yarbrough at [tim@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:tim@arkansasbaptist.org).

## ‘I shall again praise Him’

This morning, Psalms 42 and 43 were part of my Bible reading. There is a repeated phrase in verse five of both songs, and in a very slightly altered version in verse 11. The psalmist cried, “Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him” (NASB).

I cannot read this cry, or any other part of Psalms 42 and 43, without feeling the desperation of the psalmist. Have you ever been there? I’m sure you have, just as I have been. Perhaps circumstances weighed on you or bad news descended. Maybe a relationship was struggling, or you felt as if your prayers were not being heard. It could have been a time when nothing external pressed in, but your own feelings of inadequacy were thriving, or a sense of despair grabbed you for reasons you could not even define.

It happens over and over again. We go through a valley, and in that valley some small thing – something that is absolutely minuscule compared to the greatness of our God – looms like a mountain before us. It seems enormous because it is so close. And as it fills our vision, we forget that this monstrous terror is barely a grain of sand in the hand of our great God. So, we fall into despair.

But something nags at the back of our minds – some

remembrance of the last time a mountain loomed before us. We recall getting past the despair only to remember the might and the power of our God. Even more, we remember His worth. He deserves our praise, whether we can see Him past the mountain or not.

This, I think, is where the psalmist was. He could not see the greatness of God past his pain. But he could remember. And in that remembrance, he had a message for himself: “Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him.”

Even in the fire, we know we are God’s children. We know that will not change. We simply struggle to see His love, or we question whether or not He is truly willing to act on our behalf. But we know we are His.

And no matter our despair, somewhere in the depths of our hearts and minds, we know we will once again praise Him.

Will you join me in searing these words into your hearts and minds? Then, when we feel the despair descending upon us again, the Holy Spirit will bring them to our attention. He will use them to remind us of the truth that we will sing His praises again.

Ann Hibbard is a member of East End Baptist Church in East End. Read her blog at [annhibbard.com](http://annhibbard.com).



### Uncovered Dish

Ann Hibbard

## Reaching more and averaging less?

While it is true that most churches in America are plateaued or declining in both membership and attendance, we must be careful that we do not use average church attendance alone to determine whether a church is growing. Today it is quite possible to reach more and average less.

Many of us remember a time when an active church member seldom missed Sunday school or a Sunday worship service. Today, multiple research studies conservatively indicate that more than half of active church members actually attend less than 50 percent of the time. Let’s assume for a moment that the other 50 percent have perfect attendance (which we really cannot assume). If this is the case, then a church with 200 active members will maintain a weekly average of 150 (maybe).

This information is not intended to excuse any church from healthy numerical growth but, rather, to help us understand that it takes more active members today to maintain the same average attendance our churches experienced several years ago. There are some shifts the church must make to respond to this new reality.

Based on this new current reality, here are just a few appropriate, and hopefully helpful, recommended responses:

1) Outside-the-church-walls communication is more necessary than ever. Social media is no longer just a novelty, but a necessary part of a church’s communication strategy. Facebook catches most of the over-40 crowd, while Instagram catches the younger crowd. Both are necessary.

2) Bulletin and pulpit announcements and PowerPoint slides and announcements need to be repeated weekly for four to six weeks.

3) Pastors can greatly encourage weekly attendance by preaching sermon series of four to six weeks. Shorter is better. It is also good to talk each week about the message for the next week – both in the service and on social media.

4) While it seems silly to many, an annual high attendance month contest among Sunday school or Bible study groups helps stimulate attendance patterns.

5) Communicate attendance expectations to new members. Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, in his book “I Am a Church Member,” talks about how church membership is becoming increasingly meaningless. Before someone joins the church, expectations regarding participation, giving, behavior, attitude and attendance should be well-communicated.

6) Understand that much of this new attendance pattern, especially among children, is due to the large number of divided families. Joint shared custody families, shared child-rearing responsibilities with grandparents and the necessary juggling that takes place in single-parent homes mean that it is increasingly normal for children to actively attend two or even three churches.

7) Provide environments for true Christian fellowship and community building outside of church service times. Home prayer groups are a good start. Believers who share life together look forward to worshiping together.

Above all, address each cultural shift by upholding the truth of God’s Word, lovingly contextualize the gospel and always seek ways for your church to appropriately and brightly shine His Light.

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



### Answering the Call

Eric Ramsey



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## INEQUALITY

*continued from page 4*

basic theme runs through the entire chapter: inequality. Five virgins were wise; five, foolish. Two servants were trustworthy; one was not. The sheep inherit the kingdom; the goats depart to eternal fire. If that's not inequality of outcome, then what is? Christians should be comfortable with inequality of outcome. Jesus certainly is.

Such thinking rarely enters our local or national conversations. In the election last year, evangelical support for Donald Trump seemed inexplicable apart from — as Ralph Reed told Renée Montagne on NPR last year — social issues like abortion and economic insecurity. But add inequality to the mix: If Jesus is comfortable with inequality, it's no wonder that Christians who take His words seriously are comfortable with inequality too. Evangelical Christians have to be comfortable with it in their theologizing. Is it any wonder they feel the same way in their politics and economics? Democratic calls for greater equality — as opposed

to helping the hurting or being kind to the down and out — may have fallen on deaf ears.

But, fundamentally, my concern is theological, not political or economic. I'm worried that Arkansans, especially millennials, are embracing a misguided assumption that if something is equal, then it must be just, and, if something's not equal, then it must be unjust. There are political problems with this position, but we can live with the political problems. What about the theological ones?

In Matthew 25, five women do not enter into the marriage feast because they are unprepared for the bridegroom's arrival; God is the master, who gives unequally to his servants but expects them all to work, and Jesus is the Son of God, who separates the sheep and the goats. If Christians do not maintain a welcoming attitude toward inequality, then we cannot make sense of God's activity in the world or of the eternal destinies of men — and women, too.

*James Bruce is associate professor of philosophy at John Brown University in Siloam Springs and a graduate of Baylor University.*

### Letter to the Editor

#### Articles contradict

The May 18 edition of *Arkansas Baptist News* had two contradictory articles.

A Baptist Press (BP) article had several statements that are inaccurate. The article states that as a result of President Trump's executive order the IRS will not penalize a person or church for speaking about moral or political issues from a religious perspective, thereby providing relief from the law known as the Johnson Amendment.

Larry Page, president of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council, in his column on page 6 correctly states that the Johnson Amendment calls for no constraints on churches or pastors from speaking on moral and cultural issues even in the political arena. The executive order cannot provide relief from something that was not happening.

The BP article states the amendment caused confusion for churches and pastors regarding what freedoms they

have to address issues and the public policies affecting them. Again, Page correctly stated that churches and their leaders need not be reluctant to speak about matters of faith as they relate to issues affecting them. If there is confusion, it is because of articles like the one by Baptist Press. Those saying the Johnson Amendment restricts religious liberty or freedom of religion are either mistaken or are misleading our churches.

The attempt to destroy the Johnson Amendment by President Trump and his religious advisors is about money, not freedom.

They want to use money exempt from taxes to support partisan political candidates from our pulpits. This violates long-held traditional Baptist practices and beliefs. If President Trump succeeds in his efforts, it will open the door for dark money politics to pollute our pulpits and harm our witness.

**Ron West**  
*Little Rock*

### ABSC Agencies

## Out with the old, in with the new

**O**ut with the old, in with the new. This expression is familiar to most, but it is not always easy.

Some don't like change. The process of leaving behind the familiar to enter into new and often uncertain territory can be challenging.

Sooner or later, however, the time comes when change is necessary. Change can lead to progress and opportunities.

Over the past few years, leaders of the Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes) have contemplated the need for changes. Leaders wanted to know what people thought about the agency and what makes it unique. They wanted to know the impressions of others when hearing or seeing the agency name and logo.

Following are a few things people said about ABCHomes: 1) It has a home for

children in Monticello; 2) It has a ranch for teenage boys; 3) It has a home for pregnant teens (ministry closed in 2014); 4) It has a home for abused children; 5) It has homes for foster children; 6)

It is one of the best kept secrets in Arkansas; 7) It has a children's hospital, and 8) It is in the house

construction business.

While some of the impressions are, or have been, true the agency is so much more. A change was in store.

Leaders turned to an outside communication/marketing firm in Little Rock for help. Initially, leaders at the firm were asked to help the agency redesign a website, but they later were requested to help refine the current brand to better communicate the overall mission of ABCHomes and to help it

resonate with key audiences.

As a result, the agency is officially launching a new marketing initiative. A logo face-lift — the first of several stages in the marketing effort — will affect the look and feel of the 124-year-old agency's online presence, advertisements, public relations collateral, and signage.

The new logo features two hearts that form initials "a" and "b," suggesting love and support. This concept goes beyond using a visual roof on the old logo to expand the love and support to the wider range of services offered.

Do you like the new image and colors? What is your impression? Let us

know at [sprather@abchomes.org](mailto:sprather@abchomes.org).

A new website and social media platform will launch later this summer. Stay tuned for more changes.

*Stella Prather is director of communications for ABCHomes.*



#### ABCHomes

Stella Prather



ARKANSAS BAPTIST  
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## The class of 2017 is ready

**P**lease don't tell the Class of 2017, but I fought back tears May 13. It's a yearly commencement ritual for me and others who work at Williams Baptist College (WBC), although some of us are reluctant to admit it.

We behold young men and women who have come to mean more to us than they could ever fully realize. Williams is the kind of place where you get to know these students on deeply personal levels. We know their stories, where they came from, what their dreams are. They have become a part of us.

And now, here they are in caps and gowns, looking a lot more composed than the sleep-deprived zombies they appeared to be just a few days earlier in finals. They walk across the stage, grasp a diploma, pose for a picture with WBC President Tom Jones

and launch into adulthood. Hello, real world.

They're ready for it. All of us — faculty and coaches, administrators and staff — have poured a great deal of ourselves into these graduates, and we know what they

are capable of doing. We have watched them, in four short years, mature from baby-faced

freshmen into the next generation of leaders. And we have watched the Lord do incredible works in their lives.

The journey that brought them to the graduation stage hasn't always been easy, for them or for us. Nothing worth achieving ever is. We have pushed them to reach whole new levels, academically, socially and spiritually. We have tried to make them the best in their chosen fields because Christian leaders are needed on all fronts.

We have equipped them to

make a difference in a fallen world. At times, that has meant learning about aspects of our world we wish didn't even exist because that is what it takes to make an impact amid the ugliness, dysfunction and darkness that enslave so many.

The real world is the thing we have prepared them for all along. We haven't tried to shelter them from the realities of life. Quite the contrary, we have done everything we can to equip them for the challenges they will face. It has been our job, our calling and our unspeakable joy to educate these graduates for the lives that lie before them.

Yes, the Williams Class of '17 is ready. We are excited for them and the great things they will do, but we will miss them. And if you saw some of us rubbing our eyes at commencement, now you know why.

*Brett Cooper is vice president for institutional advancement at Williams Baptist College.*



#### Williams Baptist

Brett Cooper

# Ten Commandments monument coming to Arkansas Capitol in June

LITTLE ROCK – The location for a 6-foot-tall stone monument etched with the Ten Commandments has been assigned at the state Capitol grounds.

A state official said May 11 that the monument could be installed in early June, the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported.

A 2015 state law directs that the monument, which is being privately funded, must be placed somewhere on the grounds. It has been the subject of two years of debate regarding the appropriateness of

putting religious symbols on the state's most recognizable public property.

Opponents of the Ten Commandments monument have vowed to file lawsuits and have called for their own Capitol grounds monuments, most notably a statue of Baphomet, a satanic winged-goat deity, the *Democrat-Gazette* reported.

Construction of the Ten Commandments monument was funded by the American Heritage and History Foundation, which also will pay for laying the foundation and installing the 6,000-pound

monument, according to state officials.

In spite of the controversy, there was no dissension May 11 when the Capitol Arts and Grounds Commission concluded its consideration of the Ten Commandments monument and approved installing it near a walkway that leads to the Justice Building, the *Democrat-Gazette* reported.

## Trump's Israel trip renews calls for Jerusalem embassy

JERUSALEM (BP) – President Donald Trump's May 22-23 visit to Israel drew praise from some Southern Baptists and led some of them to renew calls for moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

“For several years the Jewish people in America and Messianic Jewish communities have been pleading with our government to bring back the relationship that we once had with Israel and the Jewish people,” said Ric Worshill, president of the Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship.



**FLOOD CLEANUP IN POCAHONTAS** – Baptists from across Arkansas joined trained disaster relief (DR) volunteers May 20 to assist victims of recent flooding as part of a one-day mission project. Volunteers completed 16 work requests during the event. So far, DR teams have completed 82 work requests in and around Pocahontas, prepared 4,886 meals and seen 14 people make professions of faith. DR chaplains have made a total of 420 ministry contacts. *Photo by Caleb Yarbrough*

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## NAMED

*continued from page 2*

term to expire in 2019 is Eric L. Brown, business administrator, Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro, replacing Jeff Crawford, Springdale, who resigned.

**Southern Seminary** – Nominated for a term to expire in 2022 replacing a trustee ineligible for re-election is Jeff D. Breeding, pastor, Midtown Baptist Church, Little Rock, replacing Schanon D. Caudle, Van Buren. Nominated for a second term is Nick Floyd, Fayetteville.

**New Orleans Seminary** – Nominated for a second term is Larry D. White, Conway.

**Southeastern Seminary** – Nominated for a term to expire in 2022 is Ryan A. Martin, missions pastor, University Baptist Church, Fayetteville, replacing R.E. Clark, Gravette, who resigned.

**Gateway Seminary** – Nominated for a second term is Ronnie H. Deal, Greenwood.

**ERLC** – Nominated for a second term is B. Todd Howard, Pine Bluff.

For more information – including a schedule – for the 2017 SBC Annual Meeting, visit [sbcanualmeeting.net/sbc17](http://sbcanualmeeting.net/sbc17).

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# CBC children's area excites families, tool for ministry

Caleb Yarbrough  
Arkansas Baptist News

CONWAY - When children enter the newly constructed children's wing of Central Baptist Church, Conway, the first thing that catches their eyes is a large yellow slide that spirals from the top-floor balcony down to the foyer.

A set of stairs and an elevator, adorned with plastic foliage and a sign that reads "Zacchaeus's treehouse," also provide a way down from the second floor.

But since the building opened in February, the slide has become the transportation method of choice for most children.

The theme of the first floor nursery, pre-K and kindergarten areas is "Central Park," a play on the church's name, and the areas feature walls airbrushed with cartoonish depictions of a park similar to one of the same name in New York City.

The second floor is home to Up Town Central, an area devoted to first-sixth grade children's classrooms and worship area. The sign that leads into Up Town Central is modeled after the brick and black steel sign that welcomes visitors to the historic area of downtown Conway.

Entrances to each room on both floors are designed to look like storefronts and buildings.

"We wanted it to be a biblical town with a modern-day twist," said David Moore, as-

sociate pastor for children at Central Baptist.

On a recent tour of the renovated area, Moore pointed out the Central Fire Station; a classroom featuring a sign denoting Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as its captains; an announcements display that resembles a food truck, and a large worship area styled as a movie theater - including a marquee above its entrance.

Inside the worship area is a large open space used for seating and games. A stage with TVs and a large projector screen is used for speakers, worship musicians and other performances. Garage doors on both sides of the room can be opened to increase capacity.

High-tech lighting is controlled from a sound booth. During activities or vacation Bible school performances, Moore said, the lights can be programmed to appear like lightning, ocean waves, rainbows and more.

With the role of technology in much of today's educational environments, each classroom in the children's area features a TV, utilized by small group leaders teaching each class. Each room also has a wall-mounted digital camera for security purposes.

Bryant Wilson, a summer intern at Central Baptist, said he surrendered to children's ministry when he was a senior in high school and is currently studying ministry at Central Baptist College in Conway.



The new children's area at Central Baptist Church, Conway, opened in February. It's themes are Central Park and Up Town, and it features a large slide, an elevator designed to look like a treehouse and rooms made to look like a fire station, movie theater and more. Each room includes TVs, which are used to teach small groups, and digital cameras for security. *Photos by Caleb Yarbrough*

"I will never forget the first Sunday we opened this place," Wilson said. "We had that garage door down so the kids couldn't peek in."

"Brother David had them all sitting over there. He said,

"This is a building that God gave us, and we are going to use it to show other people about Him," said Wilson. "Then that door opens up

and you see the kids' eyes go from, 'I'm kind of tired,

Mom,' to 'Oh my gosh, what is this building?' We let them run around and see what everything looked like, and they were just ecstatic.

"Every time new kids walk in, they have that same look

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of wonder of, ‘Wow, this is a children’s’ building. A place for me to learn more about God,” he said.

Wilson said recently an elementary school class used the theater-styled worship room for an event, allowing Central Baptist’s staff to give the children and teacher a tour of the facility and tell them about the church ministries.

Even before the recent construction and renovations were completed, Central Baptist’s staff made a concerted effort to minister to the workers who completed the project.

“Whoever was working – we wanted them to see Christ in us,” said Moore. “We brought them donuts and would con-



stantly go over there and walk. We didn’t want them just over there building. We wanted to connect with them.”

Don Chandler has served

as senior pastor of Central Baptist since 1979. During his 38 years as pastor, Chandler has seen God grow Central’s facilities to meet the needs of the church’s ministry.

In addition to adding its new children’s wing, Central Baptist also underwent an extensive update of its sanctuary, added a coffee shop-styled Connect fellowship area in place of its former nursery, repurposed former children’s classrooms into adult classrooms and meeting rooms,

renovated and expanded its kitchen and expanded its food pantry’s storage area – all since March 2016.

However, if you ask Chandler, while new and updated facilities may enhance the aesthetic experience of members and visitors – they do not “do” ministry.

“Ministry is done outside these four walls by-and-large,” said Chandler. “I still have to



counsel. I still have to pray over sick, and we still sing and

preach every Sunday.”

“I’m quite sure that the updates to the children’s ministry have enhanced the beauty of it and given the kids more opportunity to enjoy their worship,” said Chandler. “But, you are talking to the wrong guy, because I have been in ministry almost 50 years, and I remember when we had maybe 15,000 square feet and we packed people on one another.

“We did all the things that you had to do. We had Sunday school at night instead of in the morning because we didn’t have enough classrooms,” he said.

Chandler said the church’s recent additions and renovations haven’t changed his approach to ministry, but he does think that they have brought more visitors to the church and excited many of the families in the church.

While more space and technology are helpful, they can’t do the church’s work for them, said Chandler.

“When you get down to it, the fact is that lost people need to hear the gospel and saved people need to be equipped for ministry, and you’ve still got to do all the things you’ve always had to do,” said Chandler.

Contact Caleb Yarbrough at [caleb@arkansasbaptist.org](mailto:caleb@arkansasbaptist.org). For more photos of Central Baptist’s recent renovations visit [arkansasbaptist.org/photo-gallery](http://arkansasbaptist.org/photo-gallery).

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## Obituaries

**Roy Richmond Griffin**, 99, of Little Rock, died May 18.



Griffin

He was preceded in death by his wife, Bertha, and is survived by three daughters, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a brother and a sister.

Griffin served in the United States Army during WWII.

During his military service, he helped establish the 531st Engineer Shore Regiment, the first land-sea unit in the U.S. Army, training with British and Canadian forces in the Irish Sea.

Griffin participated in the Battle of the Bulge, served under General Patton, helped liberate Buchenwald Concentration Camp and received a Purple Heart on the battlefield.

He remained on the front lines until VE (Victory in Europe) day.

In total, Griffin's service record lists nine campaigns in the European theatre.

Following the death of his wife in 2003, Griffin travelled with his family and extended family, retracing his steps in WWII through France, Italy and Sicily.

Griffin received the Amazing Spirit Award from Baptist Health in 2004.

In late 2004, Griffin was honored for his participation

in the Normandy invasion in Valognes, France, by the French Government, during the 60th anniversary celebration of D-Day.

Most recently, the ARVets (Arkansas Veterans) organization honored his military service as the 2014 Outstanding Veteran of Past Conflicts in a ceremony at the Clinton Library.

"Most will remember these things (about Griffin): his unwavering faith; his exceptional wit; his mouthwatering biscuits and sawmill gravy; treasured time 'porch sitting' with anyone who happened by; and his blackberry jam and home-grown tomatoes, which were, the best, period. He never had much material wealth, yet it would be hard to find a richer man. Those that were given the opportunity to know him were truly blessed," his family wrote in his official obituary.

Funeral services were held

May 23 at Woodlawn Baptist Church in Little Rock.

Burial, with military honors, took place May 23 at County Line Cemetery in Glen Allan, Miss.

## Church life

**North Hills Baptist Church, Sherwood**, hosted its third annual central Arkansas gospel music jamboree June 2-3. Groups performing included Heaven's Echoes, NHim, The Kinsmen and Velvet Ridge.

**Billy Knowles** was ordained May 21 during a deacon ordination service at Rison Baptist Church in Rison. Danny Allen serves as pastor.

**Sugarloaf Baptist Church, Heber Springs**, had more than 60 professions of faith (salvations) and 19 baptisms as a result of the recent spring revival

led by evangelist Ken Freeman from Martindale, Texas.

## Baptist life

The **Central Arkansas International Mission Board (IMB) alumni fellowship** met May 6 in Benton.

The group of nearly 50 included career and short-term missionaries, Journeymen and missionary kids (MKs).

Dick Avey, IMB trustee from Arkansas, also attended.

## On the move

**Daniel Bramlett** has been called as pastor of First Baptist Church, Hope, beginning June 4.

**Hayes Linville** is serving as youth minister at First Baptist Church, Star City.

**Jacob Jones** is serving as youth pastor of First Baptist Church, Booneville.

**Roosevelt Brown** is serving as pastor of Family Church, Pine Bluff, formerly known as South Side Baptist Church.



### Houseparents needed: Baptist Home for Children, Monticello.

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# ABN

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# Classifieds

## PASTOR

Lambrook FBC seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resumes to: Johnny Williamson, PO Box 544, Elaine, AR 72333.

FBC Gentry, AR seeking **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to: fbcgentrypastorsearch@gmail.com or mail to FBC Gentry, Search Committee, Box 116, Gentry, AR 72734.

FBC Clarendon, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Send resumes to FBC Search Committee, PO Box 324, Clarendon, AR 72029, or email resumes to jrbreynolds@gmail.com.

## OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

FBC, England, is searching for a **full-time student/family pastor**. Please submit resume to: pastor.englandfbc@yahoo.com or 201 E. Haywood, England Ar. 72046.

First Baptist Church of Bay, AR, (located just

outside of Jonesboro) is seeking a **part-time minister of music** who is committed to leading a blended worship service. Resumes may be mailed to First Baptist Church, PO Box 190, Bay, AR 72411 or submitted to [www.bayfbc.org](http://www.bayfbc.org).

**Student pastor** opening at First Benton: The FBC Next Generation Ministries Team is looking for a new **team member to lead our ministry with Junior High and Senior High students (grades 8-12)**. We have a hard-working team (Next Gen pastor, preschool minister, children's minister, and middle school pastor) with strong chemistry and really enjoy doing life together. We are looking for a teammate with the following qualities: - high energy, team player - eager to develop relationships with students and families in our community - initiate and maintain an active presence on the local school campuses - lead a humble and energetic team of volunteers - some experience in leading in a larger church setting. E-mail Next Gen Pastor Clay Cunningham at [clay.cunningham@fbc Benton.org](mailto:clay.cunningham@fbc Benton.org) with questions or to

submit your resume. The deadline for resumes is Mon., June 5, 2017.

The Otter Creek Community Church is prayerfully seeking a **part-time minister of music**. Accepting resumes through June 15, 2017. Submit resume to: [info@theocchurch.com](mailto:info@theocchurch.com). Attention: Music Search Committee.

FBC Marion seeking **part-time associate student minister**. Includes duties with middle school and worship arts ministries. Send resumes to [students@firstmarion.org](mailto:students@firstmarion.org) by June 15.

A healthy mixed-generational church is looking for a **full-time student pastor**. Church focuses on small groups, worship, evangelism and missions. Send resumes to: [Resumes@Waterlooad.org](mailto:Resumes@Waterlooad.org) or mail to Waterloo Road Baptist Church, 3100 E. Waterloo Rd., Edmond, OK, 73034.

Levy Church, NLR, seeks **full-time worship/executive pastor**. Send resumes to: [steventiner@levybaptist.com](mailto:steventiner@levybaptist.com).

**Full-time minister to youth and families**, Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Hot

Springs, AR. Will work closely with senior pastor to meet the needs of a growing church. Email resume to [mwiles@cablelynx.com](mailto:mwiles@cablelynx.com).

First Baptist Harrisburg, AR, is seeking a **full-time minister of music and youth**. Email resume to [kellyjones@harrisburgfbc.com](mailto:kellyjones@harrisburgfbc.com). Job description available at [www.harrisburgfbc.com](http://www.harrisburgfbc.com).

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church is looking for a **part-time children's director** for our growing GROVE KIDZ MINISTRY. E-mail your resume to [ckinzler@pleasantgrovelv.org](mailto:ckinzler@pleasantgrovelv.org).

Southside BC, Paris, seeks a **FT or PT worship leader**. Must be able to lead a blended worship service. Ability to lead and work with praise band and choir is required. Send resume to [billy@ssbchurch.org](mailto:billy@ssbchurch.org).

FBC Dardanelle is seeking a **worship leader, part-time or full-time** with other duties. Send resume to [fbc dardanelle@gmail.com](mailto:fbc dardanelle@gmail.com).

East End Baptist Church is seeking a **bi-vocational worship leader**. Responsibilities

will include leading music in Sunday morning and evening services and leading the choir. Contact the church at 4701 East End Road, Hensley, AR 72065 or by emailing [pastor@eeb-car.com](mailto:pastor@eeb-car.com).

Small church needs **music director**. Sundays only. Contact [sulliglenda@yahoo.com](mailto:sulliglenda@yahoo.com) if interested.

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

# ABN

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JUNE 11, 2017

September 11, 2001, was a dark day in our nation's history. I remember working at my desk and learning of the terror attacks on our nation. In the weeks that followed, churches around the world held prayer services. Pews were packed as people sought the Lord's comfort. Since then, some of those very people no longer think about God. They fail to remember God's faithfulness and provision during that chaotic and uncertain time.

Just as we remember the events of that September day and God's faithfulness, it is important for Christians to remember the goodness of our God. Psalm 78 teaches us the importance of passing along our legacy of faith to future generations.

In Psalm 78:5-8, the psalmist recalled the faithfulness of God over the course of Israel's history. Each generation was commanded to teach the statutes to their children so that they, in turn, could pass them along to the next generation. In doing so, the hope was that each generation would avoid Israel's past mistakes and

gain a strong understanding of God's love.

However, in Psalm 78:32-39, we see a different story. The writer pointed out the fickleness of Israel. Even when God provided protection and so much more, they often turned their backs on Him. When they got in trouble, the Israelites "remembered that God was their Rock"

(Ps. 78:35, NIV). For a while the people would honor God, but as time progressed, "they would flatter him with their mouths" and "were not faithful to his covenant" (Ps. 78:36-37, NIV). However, when they cried out to Him, God forgave their sins.

At times, we turn our backs on God. However,

He is still merciful to our generation. As believers, we need to pass along our legacy of faith and speak of God's goodness to our children and grandchildren. Future generations need to know we all fail, but we have a Heavenly Father who waits patiently for His children to return to Him.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## The past

PSALM 78:5-8; 32-39



Vickie Lee Sherwood

In communities all over the country, this time of year is marked by graduations. Students pass from one stage of life into the next as they complete high school, college or graduate school. Some leave one educational institution for another, while others complete their career preparation and enter the workforce. With these changes, people move in and out of each others' lives.

Often, it is in school that people form the friendships that will prove to be lifelong. Certainly there are many superficial friendships along the way, but those show themselves for what they are as the seasons of life change and people lose touch.

A person may have numerous acquaintances, but true friendships are rare. True friendships stand the test of time and persevere regardless of location, distance and circumstance. Acquaintances are enjoyable and provide general companionship in the day-to-day activities of life, but a true friend is there to celebrate the good times and empathize through the bad, beyond the daily rou-

tine of life.

David and Jonathan were true friends. At great cost to himself, Jonathan befriended David and aided him when Jonathan's father, Saul, sought to do David harm. Jonathan spoke highly of David, gave David palace inside information, and visibly supported David - all for the good of his friend, even though the rise of

David meant that Jonathan would never become king. After Jonathan had died, David continued to honor their friendship, caring for Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, in his time of need, even though Mephibosheth represented a counterclaim to David's throne.

Believers need friends who will stay true in the

lows and highs of life, but friends who will also provide biblical wisdom, accountability, prayer and edification as they pursue the calling of God on their lives. True friendship costs both parties greatly, but it also rewards both parties richly. To have a friend, a person must be a friend. How can you be a true friend to another today?

## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Forge true friendship

1 SAMUEL 18:1-4; 19:4-7; 20:10-13; PROVERBS 17:17



Daniel Johnson Dover

JUNE 18, 2017

When I was a small child, my mother taught me Psalm 23. This simple Bible chapter became my nighttime prayer. I will always be grateful to my mother for teaching me these verses and sharing her faith in the Good Shepherd with me. Psalm 23 is a source of comfort and is packed with promises from our Heavenly Father.

First, God knows what we need and provides for those needs at just the right time. Finances may be tight; a job loss occurs, or a loved one is sick. Whatever our need is, the Father has an abundant supply to meet that need, and He will provide.

He also desires that His children rest and be restored. Our world is fast-paced, and finding down-time is rare. However, if we follow Him, the Shepherd will displace chaos with sweet times of rest and peace. In those times we can regain a renewed fellowship with the Father and grow stronger in our Christian walk.

The Shepherd provides comfort

in times of loss. All humans will face death, but we do not have to walk through that journey alone. Our Father is there holding our hand, guiding our steps and comforting us. In addition, when the world attacks us, evil surrounds us and people abandon us, God walks with us and provides His protection and love. We do not have to fear, because God has our backs.

Because we can trust the Good Shepherd to guide us on the right path, we have the assurance of eternal life. We must stay focused on Him through Bible study, prayer and biblical teaching. Just as a shepherd never leads his sheep astray in the wilderness, the Good Shepherd will never abandon us.

The Shepherd promises His followers a rich reward in heaven. When God calls us to our heavenly home, we will feast at His banquet table. We will not be in need or be afraid of our enemies. God's provisions are all we need, and our hearts will be blessed to overflowing.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## The Shepherd

PSALM 23:1-6



Vickie Lee Sherwood

One of the challenges of raising children is their propensity to rebel against the authority of their parents. Rebellion may manifest itself in back talk, ignoring chores, skipping class or any number of different ways. Parents must help their children understand the importance of submitting to authority, even when doing so is disagreeable.

Respecting authority doesn't end once a person grows up, leaves home and starts out on his or her own. God has ordained authority structures to exist for everyone: the government, the church, at work, and at home - even leisure activities, such as sports, are governed by authority. Authority structures are given as a common grace of God to mitigate sin and allow human flourishing. Romans 13 reveals that all legitimate authority originates in God; therefore, when a person rebels against such an authority, which is properly governing within its mandate, that person rebels against God Himself.

David was aware of God's calling

on Saul's life and, though David also had a calling on his life, he refused to usurp Saul's God-given authority. David faithfully served Saul when called upon and, even when Saul persecuted him, honored Saul's authority by sparing his life on more than one occasion.

Like David, believers should honor the authority God has placed in their lives.

When entrusted with authority, believers should lead well by faithfully serving the Lord in obedience to His ultimate authority and by looking out for the interests of those under their charge. Christians should do solid work at the office, especially when the work is difficult; fulfill their roles in the family, be it as husband, wife or child; and follow the leadership of their pastors, making it a joy for their shepherds to serve.

Respecting authority honors the Lord because it is He Who has ordained the existence and responsibility of these authorities and He Who will hold them accountable for how they exercised their charge.

## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

## Respect authority

1 SAMUEL 24:3-12; ROMANS 13



Daniel Johnson Dover

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