



ABSC meeting attended by nearly 700

LITTLE ROCK - Messengers to the 158th Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting Nov. 1-2 approved a 2011 Cooperative Program (CP) budget of nearly \$21.5 million, elected officers and passed several resolutions.

GO! Across the Street, Across Arkansas, Across the World was the theme of the meeting, which was held at First Baptist Church, Little Rock. The meeting was attended by 687 registered messengers, which is down from last year's 761 messengers at Central Baptist Church, Jonesboro. Guests are not counted.

Greg Addison, pastor of First Baptist Church, Cabot, and president of the 2011 ABSC Pastors' Conference, was elected convention president unopposed. Other officers elected were Ken Jerome, intentional interim pastor, First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, first vice president; and Matt Pryor, pastor, First Baptist Church, Wooster, second vice president. Jerome and Pryor were unopposed.

Messengers approved resolutions on Christian citizenship, services to children at risk, marriage, alcohol and the sanctity of human life. Another resolution expressed appreciation to convention leaders, the host church and those involved in the planning and arrange-

See **ABSC** page 3



Women worship at the Ministers Wives Conference Oct. 31, just prior to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting held at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

After mishap, pastor urges

'Listen to still small voice'

Lisa Watson

Arkansas Baptist News

NORTH LITTLE ROCK - When Charlie Winters, pastor of Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock, decided to ride his motorcycle to Vilonia Oct. 21 to take some presents to his grandchildren, he had no idea his decision would lead - not only to a near catastrophe - but ultimately to a lesson on the importance of listening to God.

On the way home from Vilonia, Winters said he heard God's "still, small voice" prompting him to go back home on Interstate 40, instead of return along State Highway 89, where deer commonly cross.

However, Winters chose not to listen to that voice - a choice he would later regret.

While riding what Winters said was 55-60 miles per hour along State Highway 89 about five miles north of Mayflower, the pastor hit a deer head-on.

Though he was protected somewhat by a helmet, riding jacket and gloves, Winters believes it's a miracle he survived the accident.

"I did a nosedive in the middle of the high-

See **CYCLE** page 2



Winters



See winners of ABN giveaways on page 2.

Lomax named Wash. Madison DOM

FAYETTEVILLE - Ron Lomax, global missions pastor at First Baptist Church, O'Fallon, Mo., for the past five years, is the new director of missions of the Washington Madison Baptist Association in Fayetteville.

He was elected Sept. 29 during a special-called meeting of the association's board of directors. Lomax was keynote speaker during the association's annual meeting held Oct. 17 at Sang Av-

enue Baptist Church, Fayetteville.

Lomax and his wife, Karen, served as missionaries for the International Mission Board for nearly 19 years in South Africa prior to joining the staff of the O'Fallon church. The couple has three grown children.

"We are grateful to God for calling Ron Lomax

See **LOMAX** page 3

Union Valley pastor marks 25 years

Tim Sparks
Special to ABN

BEEBE - Twenty-five years ago Ronald Reagan was in office, an average gallon of gas cost 89 cents, "tweeting" was something birds did and Tommy Miller preached his first sermon as pastor of Union Valley Baptist Church, Beebe.

A recent study said the average pastor stays at his church for seven years, but God has kept Miller at Union Valley for 25 years.

A hardware salesman, Miller joined the church in 1978. He taught Sunday school, helped with the youth, and was ordained as a deacon. On Nov. 9, 1986, Union Valley's pastor left and Miller agreed to stand in as the interim pastor. He started preaching to a small congregation of only 132 members. Today, the congregation has grown to more than 1,100.

"(Pastor) Miller not only preaches the Word, but he serves his church family and the community in a va-

riety of ways," said Tracie Taylor, a Union Valley member.

She added, "He not only has worked in the disaster relief program and led mission trips in the United States and overseas, but also he takes the time to visit members in the hospital or members who are in a time of need. He has given his time to serving as a board member for Siloam Springs Baptist Assembly so every child has a chance to



See **MILLER** page 2

Miller, with his wife, Vickie

Barling church hosts 'Messiah in the Passover'

BARLING – When members of First Baptist Church, Barling, celebrated the Lord's Supper Nov. 13, they had a new perspective on communion, thanks to a Jewish rabbi.

Rabbi Boris Goldin, a Messianic Jew who is part of Chosen People Ministries, presented the "Messiah in the Passover" presentation at the church Oct. 23. Chosen People Ministries is a ministry dedicated to praying for, evangelizing, discipling and serving Jewish people, according to the organization's website.

Jay Edmondson, pastor of First Baptist, not only referred to Goldin's Passover demonstration during the Lord's Supper, he also used matzo bread, which is traditionally used in the Passover Seder meal.

During the demonstration, Goldin illustrated how Jesus fulfilled the ancient feast of Passover, through a condensed version of the traditional Passover Seder.

In a recent interview, Edmondson noted the symbolism found throughout the Passover Seder meal, including a picture of the Trinity.

As part of the meal, Edmondson said Goldin placed matzo bread in a cloth and divided it into three sections, which represented the Trinity.

Watching the meal and seeing the symbolism was "really exciting and encouraging," said Edmondson.

He said the demonstration provided a much-needed opportunity to "recharge" his church members.

"It was an outstanding presentation that really gave us that connection back to that time," said Edmondson, noting it's easy to be focused only on today's church ministry when "there is a heritage of Christianity that we can learn from."

Plans are underway for Goldin to return to the church for another demonstration in spring 2013.



Rabbi Boris Goldin of Chosen People Ministries speaks during the "Messiah in the Passover" presentation at First Baptist Church, Barling.

Three winners announced in ABN drawings

TWO MISSIONARIES and a church planter pastor were winners of the drawings held by the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Annual Meeting.

Charles Browning, an International Mission Board (IMB) missionary serving in the Middle East since 1983, is the winner of the Kindle Fire tablet computer. Browning, an Arkansas native from Judsonia, is on his final stateside assignment with his wife, Nancy. The Brownings have four children and seven grandchildren in Arkansas and a daughter who resides in Pennsylvania.



Browning

Jim Gentry, an IMB missionary serving in East Asia, is the winner of the Scholar's Library: Silver from Logos Bible Software. Gentry, an Arkansas native, returned to the state two months ago, along with his wife, Laura Holly. They are enjoying spending time with their stateside families.



Gentry

"(We) are looking forward to the holidays with family after being separated the past four years," said Gentry. The couple has two daughters and three grandchildren in Jonesboro.

Kerry L. Woolfolk, church plant-

er pastor of The Lord is my Shepherd Baptist Church, North Little Rock, is the winner of the WORD-search 9 Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - New Testament software from WORD-search. Woolfolk's church was started in September 2011 as part of the Little Rock urban church planting emphasis. Woolfolk and his wife, Angela, reside



Woolfolk

in Little Rock. The couple has six children and six grandchildren.

"It was great to meet everyone who stopped by our booth in the exhibit area," said Tim Yarbrough,

ABN editor. "Through these giveaways, we were able to sign up a lot of new ABN Now digital edition subscribers. It was a great promotion, and the ABN staff was honored to be a part of the annual meeting."

Yarbrough added, "We continue to offer discounted subscriptions for churches and individuals throughout the month of November."

"We ask everyone who does not subscribe to consider signing up for a church or individual plan and supporting efforts of the ABN to tell the story of Arkansas Baptists for many years to come."

CYCLE

continued from page one

way," he said.

Immediately following the accident, when Winters regained consciousness, his first thought was that he needed to get up so he would be able to preach that Sunday.

"(Rescue workers) assured me I probably wouldn't be preaching so soon," he said.

And they were right. Winters was transported to Baptist Health Medical Center in Little Rock where he had to have his upper lip sewn back on. The collision also knocked loose four teeth. In addition, he suffered a broken rib and some torn ligaments in his ankle. Winters had "road rash" on his face, which he joked was "a terrible way to get microdermabrasion."

Though he's not sure, he said he thinks his motorcycle was totaled.

Winters said he believes he could have prevented the accident had he listened to God's prompting.

"That little voice ... told me not to go," he said. "We need to learn to listen to those promptings."

Back in the pulpit Nov. 4, Winters encouraged his congregation to "start paying attention to those promptings (from God)."

But he also kept his sense of

humor, joking that the accident was a "tough way to kill (his) first deer."

"You can tell (the *Arkansas Baptist News* readers) that Bro. Charlie gives them permission to kill a whole



Charlie Winters, pastor of Cedar Heights Baptist Church, North Little Rock, on his motorcycle, a 1999 Suzuki Intruder he purchased so he could ride with the Patriot Guard Riders.

bunch of deer this year," Winters laughed during an interview.

On a more serious note, Winters is grateful to the emergency rescue workers, doctors, his family and his church for their support.

He said he was also "amazed" to find that the Arkansas Baptist State Convention personnel put him on the prayer list.

"It was real humbling," he said. "It meant a lot to me."

Noting the tough times facing many people today, Winters said, "We need to learn to listen to that still, small voice."

Contact Lisa Watson at lisa@arkansasbaptist.org.

MILLER

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go to camp."

Twenty-five years ago, a young salesman came to Beebe and followed God's call to become pastor of Union Valley Baptist Church, and he has given his life ever since in service to God and His church.

Tim Sparks is a member of Union Valley Baptist Church, Beebe.

CP: 'Together we can change the world'

LITTLE ROCK – “I believe it’s not too late. Together we can change the world.”

This was the message of the theme song sung during the Cooperative Program report presented by Rusty Hart of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) during the Tuesday, Nov. 1, evening session of the ABSC Annual Meeting.

Hart’s creative presentation included video, live musical performances and children waving streamers, all with the goal of showing messengers how the Cooperative Program is at work across Arkansas, the nation and around the world.

During a slide show presentation, which was set to music, Hart reported statistics outlining the ways the Cooperative Program provides the means to minister in Arkansas, the nation and around the world.

Several Arkansas Baptist ministers also gave personal testimonies outlining how Cooperative Program resources provided ministry opportunities.

Joe Garner, Arkansas Valley Baptist Association missionary, said his

involvement in disaster relief, which is made possible through the Cooperative Program and other funds, has been the “most rewarding” ministry of which he’s ever been a part.

He invited those interested in serving as a disaster relief volunteer to “talk to someone” about the ministry.

Ministry to the Mapuche people in Chile was the focus of Clint Ritchie’s testimony during the report. Richie, who serves as pastor of First Baptist Church, Hampton, said his involvement in international missions to the Mapuche has led to the formation of a network of pastors and churches that are committed to reaching the unreached people group.

“The biggest impact is that we aren’t focused on ourselves,” said Ritchie of his church’s mission involvement. “We have a place outside the U.S. I think our vision has expanded.”

He said, “If a church in the least populated county (Calhoun) in Arkansas can be involved in missions, I believe anyone can.”



Rusty Hart (left) looks on as Lori McKay (left), Katie Dudley (center) and Holly Horne Carlisle sing during the Cooperative Program report.

He noted there are now four Mapuche people who have made decisions to follow Christ.

The presentation concluded with Hart, several soloists and a combined choir – including the Arkansas Master Singers, Ouachita Baptist

University choir and the Arkansas Baptist Schools high school and elementary choirs – singing the final verse and chorus of the theme song, ending with, “I believe it’s not too late. Together we can change the world.”

First Baptist, Almyra, top in CP percentage

LITTLE ROCK – With more than 40 percent of its budget dedicated to the Cooperative Program last year, First Baptist Church, Almyra, is the

top church in Arkansas in overall percentage giving. The church was recognized, along with other top givers, during the Cooperative Pro-

gram Breakfast held at First Baptist Church, Little Rock, during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting. The church also took top honors in per capita giving, with \$1,224 per person given to the Cooperative Program.

Cross Church, Springdale, was first in overall giving, with more than \$500,000 given through the Cooperative Program.

First Baptist, Almyra, also led in percentage giving among churches averaging 0-49 people in Sunday school, while Union Baptist Church, Harrison, led the way in percentage giving among churches averag-

ing 50-99 people in Sunday school. Other churches leading in percentage giving include First Baptist Church, Monette, among churches averaging 100-149; First Baptist Church, Des Arc, among churches averaging 150-299; Union Valley Baptist Church, Beebe, among churches averaging 300-499; First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, among churches averaging 500-749; and First Baptist Church, Russellville, among churches averaging 750-plus in Sunday school.

For a complete list of top churches in Cooperative Program giving, go to www.arkansasbaptist.org/CPArk2011.

across





For more coverage of
the Arkansas Baptist
State Convention Annual
Meeting, turn to pages 6, 7
and 12, and visit online at
www.arkansasbaptist.org

ABSC

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ments for the meeting. (Text of the resolutions approved by messengers is available at www.arkansasbaptist.org/2011resolutions.)

The only miscellaneous business was a motion to dedicate the 2011 printed ABSC annual to Pete Petty, a longtime convention staff member, pastor and associational missionary. Petty died of cancer earlier this year.

Flat budget approved

The CP budget of \$21,496,500 includes \$9,194,053 (42.77 percent) for Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) causes and \$12,302,447 (57.23 percent) for missions and ministries in Arkansas. The SBC portion includes an increase of \$42,993 (0.2 percent) above the 2011 allocation, which is

the fifth such increase by the ABSC in a five-year plan to increase the SBC portion by 1 percent. The 2012 budget represents no increase over the 2011 budget.

Additionally, an ABSC Executive Board recommendation to revise its budget formula for the 2013-17 budget years was approved, which calls for the convention to continue to increase the percentage of funds (total receipts) forwarded to the SBC, to divide state budget surpluses with the SBC and to conduct a statewide emphasis every five years encouraging churches to increase their CP percentage.

The new budget formula continues the 0.2 percent increases each year to SBC causes.

The convention’s nominating committee report was approved with no challenges and no discussion. The committee nominates people to serve on the boards of ABSC en-

ties and institutions.

Jason Noel, pastor of East Side Baptist Church, Paragould, was re-elected as ABSC Executive Board president. Stan Ballard, pastor of

Nettleton Baptist Church, Jonesboro, was elected vice president.

The 2012 annual meeting will be held Oct. 30-31 at First Baptist Church, Cabot.

LOMAX

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to serve with us as the associational missionary of the Washington Madison Baptist Association,” said Doug Falknor, pastor of First Baptist Church, Fayetteville, and chairman of the association’s search committee.

“Ron has been uniquely gifted and equipped by God to assist our churches as we reach our region,



Lomax

state and world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Lomax has a master’s degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Karen is a dental hygienist.

He officially began his new duties in the association Nov. 1 and was introduced to other associational missionaries at the group’s fellowship dinner held Oct. 31, prior to the start of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting.

The 'religion' of sports

I'll be the first to admit this is my favorite time of year. I absolutely love football season. What's more, I love the Arkansas Razorbacks and revel in their winning ways.

Being a Missouri native, I love the St. Louis Cardinals, as well, and – perhaps like many reading this column – followed every play during the postseason on their way to the World Series championship.

College basketball, another of my favorite sports, will follow close

on the heels of football, though there are several weeks left for the Razorbacks to play. There's a new coach in Fayetteville, and lots of excitement is assured as Mike Anderson takes control of Hog round ball.

As I mentioned in a recent column, I really don't watch all that much TV – unless it is sports-related. I'll watch prep, college, pro – it really doesn't matter. I like 'em all.

But, sports are not my religion.

Recently, I was in a worship service where a pastor made a point that really got me to thinking (imagine that). He contrasted how people worship in church as compared to how they root for their favorite team.

After all, how many churches do you know that attract 70,000 worshippers on a sunny afternoon? In the Southeastern Conference, from 60,000 to 100,000 in attendance is commonplace each and every Saturday of the season.

While Razorback fans are fond of "Calling the Hogs" by raising their hands, sadly, few Baptists get that excited in their worship of the

God of the universe.

Like most Southern Baptists, I come from a church background where the raising of hands – or for that matter, showing much emotion – isn't all that common.

In my church growing up, to raise one's hands and arms in church was frowned upon and mostly reserved for Pentecostal folks. That was our tradition.

So why does it feel OK to show that kind of enthusiasm for

the Hogs – or other favorite sports team – and not for God?

It's a mystery. I'll admit I am a part of the "don't like to show too much emotion in church" crowd, which I am constantly trying to overcome. In fact, my wife has told me it might be best to give up clapping during a praise song because I can't seem to get the timing down. Just because someone doesn't show emotion during worship, does that make the person less spiritual than a person who does? Of course not.

I have been privileged to be in hundreds of Southern Baptist churches across our nation the past 20-plus years. Southern Baptists – while sharing the same doctrine and values – worship very differently in say, Boston, than in Arkansas. For example, I recall many years ago worshipping in one of our churches in the Boston area where the music was jazz. It was a very unfamiliar environment for this Southerner, but I kind of liked it.

The point, of course, is that we all worship the same powerful and awesome God in a variety of ways – even right here in Arkansas.

PRESSING ON

Tim Yarbrough



That doesn't mean that one style is better than the other. For some churches, it means honoring tradition. For other churches – often in new church starts – it means using a style that will best reach their surrounding communities in new and innovative ways, while staying true to biblical values.

So this Saturday, when you're

calling the Hogs or any other time when you are rooting for your favorite team, consider pausing and thanking God for the unique way He made you and the different ways we can worship Him.

Tim Yarbrough is editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News*. He is available to speak in your church. Email him at tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

SBC name change talk 'interesting' discussion

This talk of a new name change for Southern Baptists is interesting. I am as sentimental as the next man for our traditions, but wish to point out that the name "Southern" has more than merely regional connotations – it is a relic of the Civil War, of old Dixie Land, and as such, one of the better things to result from the

Confederacy. Unlike the states of the Union, however, the Southern Baptists never rejoined the Northern Baptists from whom they had separated at the time of the war. We have thrived since, thank God. I definitely think that our name should at least have the word "Baptist" in it because it refers to one of our de-

nomination's major contributions to the Reformation, of moving beyond infant christening back to the believer's baptism by immersion of the first century apostles. To change the word "Baptist" would be moving into the new non-denominational craze, it seems to me. Why would we want to just be another new-fangled church? I

hope that God will reveal a good name change for us, if He so desires one, to some prominent pastor in a vision or dream. Then, give that pastor a lie detector test.

Stephan Allsup
Little Rock

Letters welcome

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR



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Baptists Ask

What is Mormonism?

Mormonism is the unofficial term to describe the doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). Based in Salt Lake City, Utah, the group has an estimated 14 million adherents worldwide. At first glance, most Americans

– and many Baptists – believe that Mormonism is a Christian denomination. A closer look, however, reveals several differences to Orthodox Christianity.

Its origin. Mormon doctrine claims that, in 1820, Joseph Smith received a visit by two angelic beings, who told him that the church needed to be restored and reformed. In 1823, it says the angel Moroni visited Smith and informed him of where to recover some buried golden writing tablets. Smith translated these tablets, which became known as The Book of Mormon.

Its official writings. Mormons accept four writings as inspired: the King James Version of the Bible (if interpreted correctly), The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants and The Pearl of Great Price. In addition, the president of the LDS is considered its modern-day prophet, and can issue new decrees to the group.

God. A well-known Mormon adage states, “As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.” Mormons believe that God was once human and righteous Mormons will one day have the opportunity to become gods as well.

Life after death. There is no hell in the Mormon faith, for salvation is universal to everyone. Mormons, however, believe there are three heavens: the Terrestrial, the Telestial and the Celestial. Righteous Mormons aspire to live in the Celestial heaven for eternity.

These doctrines are a sample of the differences between Mormonism and Christianity. The Southern Baptist Convention’s North American Mission Board has good information, and the Public Broadcasting Service’s 4-hour documentary, “The Mormons,” is worth watching. Through research, Christians should learn these differences, and they should take heed of them.

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



Gore

‘A wonderful week for Arkansas Baptists’

Last week was another wonderful week for Arkansas Baptists. Our state convention held at First Baptist Church, Little Rock, showed yet again that we are a loving, serving people who are focused on spreading the gospel. While I am not one who enjoys attending meetings, I must confess I really do enjoy attending our convention. Arkansas Baptists have a unique camaraderie that I have learned to appreciate as a transplanted Arkansan. It is a joy to “hang out” in the halls and exhibit booths and see other pastors from churches where I have preached and folks from churches where I have served. I enjoy meeting pastors and starting new relationships.

There are convention moments that I look forward to every year: the Pastors’ Conference (I actually attend all of the sessions – I can hear some of you laughing); meeting the incredible people that David Perry brings every year from the Children’s Home; the interchange between Dr. Horne and Dr. Swaim, which is both fun and a perfect example of how Arkansas Baptists are partners in ministry; that moment during the new pastor introductions when the first guy to make a joke makes everyone laugh and

starts the entertainment; and hearing that statement during one of the sermons when God grabs my heart and speaks directly into my ear. However, there is one moment that I love as much as any other. It is when

Dr. Turner prays for all of our churches at the conclusion of his message. It was as moving and authentic as it has ever been. It happens every year no matter where I am sitting, no matter the host church, no matter the events of the day and no matter how tired people may be after a long day. When he asks the Lord to use us “so that more people go to heaven and less people go to hell,” there is always a sense of unity and passion in the room. There are always audible “amens” and affirmations. It is a galvanizing moment in which we recommit ourselves to our purpose.

It is my honor to have the privilege of serving you this coming year. It is an honor because I love being an Arkansas Baptist. Most importantly, it is an honor because

God has given me the privilege to serve with Arkansas Baptists who are unified in His call to spread the gospel so “more people will go to heaven and less people will go to hell.”

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



PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Greg Addison

across



From Throwing in the Towel to Staying in the Fight

by Harry Strauss, CreateSpace, 2010

The pastor in the local church leads a life of ups and downs. Sunday can be a time of invigoration and joy, and then on Monday morning, the depression comes. The outside world may have a hard time grasping the world of the pastor. The highs and lows, ups and downs can take a toll on the pastor and his family. Many of those who enter the ministry excited and motivated to win the world for Christ may be found leaving the ministry years later.

Harry Strauss has been a pastor for 30-plus years. He has experienced, firsthand, the life that a pastor and his family lead. He has been involved in leading both small and large congregations. Strauss has a doctorate from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., and a master’s from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

In his book, “From Throwing in the Towel to Staying in the Fight,” Strauss explains how the pressures and emotions that pastors experience are really quite common. In the introduction, he provides a list of common factors that lead to frustration and discouragement. Among these factors are the failure to see growth in the church, unrealistic expectations on the pastor by the church, the feeling that the work is never finished, the sense of living in a fishbowl, blurred boundaries of ministry and marriage and the emotional drains of working with high-need people.

The validity of such a book is great. Researchers claim 90 percent of people who enter full-time ministry at age 21 are no longer in ministry by age 65. A study conducted by Focus on the Family found 80 percent of pastors and 84 percent of their spouses are depressed or discouraged. More than 40 percent of pastors are

suffering from burnout; the number for spouses is even higher at 47 percent experiencing burnout.

The 29 chapters in the book cover a myriad of topics related to the pastorate, such as calling, mentorship, suffering, heaven, preaching, sexual purity, servanthood and endurance.

For example, in the conversation about sexual purity, Strauss describes what he calls the three main points of temptation for the pastor – “the three G’s – girls, gold and glory.” He points to research that has found that 20

percent of pastors view pornography once a month, and 20 percent admit to having affairs while in the ministry.

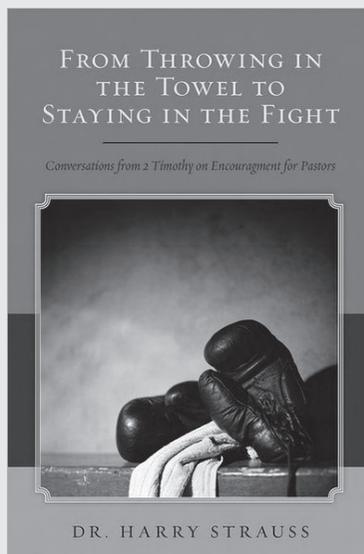
The layout of the book is user-friendly; the sections are short with encouraging quotes at the beginning, and Strauss has included 13 cartoons with which the pastor can identify. The book describes each section as a conversation and ends each section with ideas and questions that could be utilized in a group study of the book. Strauss includes ideas and suggestions for media and other books that the reader might use for further benefit. In his endorsement of the book, Henry Blackaby (author of “Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God”) says, “In this book, Pastor Harry shares keen insight out of his many years of rich pastoral experience. ... I know you will be blessed as you read it.”

This book was written to encourage pastors and to help them stay in the fight. Built around the biblical truths of 2 Timothy, the conversations will

awaken dreams and rekindle the vision for making a significant and joyous contribution to the kingdom of God. In reading this book, expect to find encouragement for the journey.

BOOK REVIEW

Adam Brown
Leonard Street Baptist
Hot Springs



Speakers encourage messengers to 'GO!'

LITTLE ROCK – Two Arkansas Baptist pastors, two state convention executive directors, a Florida pastor and the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Executive Committee chief operating officer, spoke to messengers during the 2011 Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting held Nov. 1-2 at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

The men spoke on this year's meeting theme: GO! Across the Street, Across Arkansas, Across the World.

Speakers included Clay Hallmark, pastor of First Baptist Church, Marion, and second-term ABSC president; Frank Page, SBC Executive Committee president and chief executive officer; William Rice, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Clearwater, Fla.; Emil Turner, ABSC executive director; David Hankins, Louisiana Baptist Convention executive director; and John Hodges, pastor of First Baptist Church, Salem.

Below are excerpts from their messages.

Hallmark: Turn from sin

From 1 Kings 18, Hallmark spoke about the need for "God to move in Arkansas again," during the president's message.

He noted circumstances surrounding the nation of Israel in the time of Elijah, saying the worship of false gods was being promoted, there was an intolerance of the worship of the true God and there was an economic crisis, including a drought and famine. He said it sounded similar to the situation in America today.

Highlighting the text where Elijah challenges Baal's prophets, Hallmark pointed to several things that are important if God is to move among Arkansas Baptist churches. These include the challenge of God's man, the cooperation of God's people and the consuming evidence of God's power. Hallmark noted that after these things took place among the Israelites, there was a confession of God's greatness.

He pointed to the need for repentance, confession, turning from sin and turning back to God.

"For three years, they'd been in drought, ... but because there was a time for repentance, and a time of removal and a time of restoration, praise God, there was a time for rain.

"And I want you to know something this morning, Arkansas Baptists. ... It's time to stop pretending to be something that we're not and be something that we could be if we let God work in our hearts."

Hallmark said it is time for Christians to turn their hearts to God, lead their churches with "encouraging power that comes" from the standards of God's Word and to "speak out for God's Word for (the) cause of lost souls."

Rice: Overcome discouragement

Rice spoke on overcoming discouragement to witness God at work in his message.

Taking his text from 1 Samuel 14, Rice shared the biblical story of a victory in battle brought about by Jonathan and his armor bearer. Though the rest of the Israelite army, including King Saul, had given up, Jonathan was willing to trust that God might act on his behalf to bring the victory.

1 Samuel 14:6-7 recounts the conversation between the two men.

"Jonathan said to his young armor-bearer, 'Come, let's go over to the outpost of those uncircumcised men. Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf. Nothing can hinder the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few'" (1 Sam. 14:6).

Relating the defeatist attitude of the Israelite army to the state of many churches today, Rice said, "Many of our churches are discouraged. Many of our leaders are discouraged."

However, he said church leaders must be will-



Clay Hallmark, pastor of First Baptist Church, Marion, and outgoing Arkansas Baptist State Convention president, speaks at the annual meeting.

ing to step out and believe that God will "act on their behalf."

"God can still save," said Rice. "He can do it whether you have a lot of folks or a few folks."

Though Jonathan wasn't sure what God would do, he believed in what he knew God could do.

Rice said church leaders don't need to "hide and play it safe" like Saul and his army.

To bring about change in churches, Rice said leaders must have a sense of holy dissatisfaction, a source of motivation and a spirit of cooperation.

In closing, Rice challenged pastors to remember their calls to ministry.

"God wants to do something in your life, in your ministry," he said. "Let's ... see what God will do with a people who believe Him for great things."

Page: 'Irrecoverable' moments needed

Becoming a Christian touches the past, changes the present and alters the future of the new believer, said Page.

Speaking from John 4:7 and the verses following, Page told the story of the Samaritan woman with whom Jesus had an "irrecoverable" or life-changing encounter.

When people encounter God, said Page, they often employ "spiritual defense mechanisms," blaming their sin on cultural norms, comparing themselves to others or avoiding the problem.

Jesus plumbed to the depths of her heart, while not responding to her inquiries about ethnic and gender differences.

Christ's response to the woman was "the greatest example of cross-cultural, cross-gender witnessing you'll ever see," he said.

"We need to have an irrecoverable moment with the Son of God," said Page.

Turner: 'God will provide'

Turner spoke about how to have enough despite a difficult economy and difficult circumstances, taking his text from Genesis 47.

It has been a tough year for many people in Arkansas, noted Turner. He mentioned businesses that have closed and jobs that have been lost.

Turner said one should realize having enough is not about money. Christians have other resources besides money. Second, he said, Christians should give God everything. Third, Christians should submit their wills to God and go where He leads. Fourth, he said to give God what He asks for. Turner pointed out God asks His followers to tithe, but He also asks for something else – their hearts. Finally, Turner said to give glory to God in all circumstances.

"God will provide," said Turner. "God has provided. We praise Him. We worship Him. We serve Him. We give to Him. We agree with the psalmist who said, 'Know that the Lord, He is God. It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.'"

Hankins: 'Don't quit too soon'

"Even good guys can squander their successes ... and quit too soon," Hankins told messengers.

Hankins read from several passages in 2 Kings, pointing to the "legendary" reign of Hezekiah, the 12th king of Judah.

But despite Hezekiah's successes, which included living a spiritual and moral life and prospering "in everything he did," the king did not finish well.

Hankins said an easy comparison could be made of modern-day America, which has experienced "unparalleled growth, leadership and power and opportunity, blessing self and blessing the world ... because of God's graciousness to us."

He shared three "fault lines" he feels caused the king to fail and how to learn from them.

First, "You can squander your successes if you accentuate your pleasures," said Hankins, adding Hezekiah chose, during the latter years of his reign, to be "more concerned by his creature comforts" and enjoy the pleasure of sin, rather than to continue seeking God.

Second, "You can squander your successes if you adulterate your principles. Stand for the faith," said Hankins.

Third, "You can squander your successes if you ... quit too soon."

Hankins said many people in the room, as baby boomers, don't need to quit on their generation – a generation that still needs Christ.

Hodges: Grasp God moments

Hodges encouraged messengers to "grasp the moments" God offers to accomplish the goals He has set for His people.

He challenged pastors to enable the members of their congregations to get involved in ministry.

Taking his text primarily from Psalm 37 and several chapters in Acts, Hodges said there are several requirements necessary "to accomplish going across the street, across the state and the world."

First, he said, Christians must be desperate for God and must have passion.

Hodges explained the world is filled with "great preachers who have average ministry," saying he believes this has happened because they are not desperate for God.

Secondly, Hodges said believers who want accomplish the tasks of God must be disciplined.

"We must do the basics well," he said, noting believers must come to Jesus, see the truth, bow down to Him, worship or develop intimacy with God, open their lives or become vulnerable and present themselves to the Lord.

Lastly, he said believers must have a spirit of expectation, noting the disciples came to Jesus "expecting great things."

In conclusion, Hodges said, "Let's be desperate; let's be passionate; let's be disciplined; and let's be expectant."

"That will take us across the street, the state and around the world."



Hodges

Ministers 'encouraged' during conference

LITTLE ROCK – A variety of speakers – from both inside Arkansas and numerous bordering states – preached on the topic Because He First Loved Me Oct. 31 during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Pastors' Conference held at First Baptist Church, Little Rock, prior to the ABSC Annual Meeting Nov. 1-2.

Following are excerpts from messages during the conference.

Michael Spradlin

Michael Spradlin, president of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., encouraged pastors to remember that defense wins championships – that is if the Lord is your Defender.

Speaking from Isaiah 37:21 and following, Spradlin told the story of the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, who attempted to attack Jerusalem during the reign of King Hezekiah.

"Nothing stands against our God," Spradlin said. "Our God is mighty, wonderful, holy and unapproachable. ... You can't surprise Him.

"We can't say anything except, 'You are the One true God.'"

Spradlin said God will always defend His work, His will and His people.

"This just goes to show that defense wins championships if the Lord is your Defender," said Spradlin.

He reminded pastors to "stand in the shadow of the cross, in the love of Jesus" when facing difficulties.

Jarrett Stephens

Speaking from 2 Timothy 2, Jarrett Stephens, teaching pastor at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, encouraged pastors facing discouragement to invest in people, depend on the grace of God, preach the gospel of Christ and entrust it to others, endure hardship and keep focused on the task.

Referring to the passage, Stephens said Paul was able to encourage Timothy because he had built a relationship with him.

"This is a reminder to us as church leaders that we must have relationships with the people we lead," said Stephens.

He said busyness cannot serve as an excuse for not investing in others.

"Spending time with our people during the week is what validates the message we have to proclaim," he said.

Stephens challenged pastors facing discouragement and difficulties to "look within and see Jesus Christ ... and the grace that is in Christ."

"Pastors, don't ever stop preaching the gospel. Be ready in season and out of season," he said. "If you don't do anything else, make sure you take this gospel and entrust it to others. ... Pass it on."



New Pastors' Conference officers

New Arkansas Baptist State Convention Pastors' Conference officers elected Monday, Oct. 31, are Don Chandler (left), pastor of Central Baptist Church, Conway, president, and Randy Magar, pastor of First Baptist Church, Lincoln, secretary. Not pictured is Richard Foster, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Camden, vice president.

Glen Putman

Glen Putman, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro, used a verse from Revelation to illustrate the significance of the role of the pastor in the local church.

Putman read, "In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength" (Rev. 1:16).

"When I look at Revelation, it is about the ultimate triumph of Jesus Christ," said Putman, adding that in today's complex world and political climate where people are searching for answers, pastors are charged to point them to Christ.

Sometimes, however, pastors can get caught up in the confusion of the times, as well, he added.

"We miss exactly what God is doing in our lives. We become professionals. ... We become more psychological," said Putman. "(But) it always comes back to God's Word. ... The answer to everything comes back to God's Word."

Putman identified three important aspects of pastoral ministry from Rev. 1:16.

First, "(The pastor) is standing in the hand of Jesus."

Second, "(The pastor) is sharing what Jesus says."

Third, "(The pastor) is a shining light. (He) brings glory, honor and praise to God."

Hollie Miller

Identifying and understanding one's calling is critical for pastors as they seek to effectively use their gifts for God's glory, according to Hollie Miller, pastor of Sevier Heights Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn.

Miller preached on "indications a man is called to preach" from 1 Timothy.

There must be a spirit of humility and inadequacy, said Miller, referring to 1 Timothy 1:12.

Also, "There is a commitment to godliness," he said, adding pastors should have a burden to live a godly lifestyle. "I can hardly remember a sermon my pastor preached when I was growing up, but I remember he lived a godly life."

"The presence of a (spiritual) gift," is another indication a man is called to preach, said Miller, referring to 1 Timothy 3:2-3, which says, "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money."

There is "the recognition of others," said Miller.

"Other men of God will begin to see in you that God has set you apart in some way," he said.

Miller warned that for every one of the indications of a calling to preach, there are indications of "danger for the pastor."

"Men, watch out for pride. I am amazed how much pride and ego there is (out there). ... Remember, peacock today, feather duster tomorrow."

Bryan Loritts

Bryan Loritts, lead pastor of Fellowship Memphis in Memphis, Tenn., spoke on what it takes to "finish well," using text from 1 Corinthians 9, where Paul speaks of running the race of faith.

"Starting well is easy. Finishing well – that's the challenge," said Loritts.

He continued to say that some people have had "shaky" times in their lives, "but the fact that He (God) woke you up this morning, ... is God's message of mercy and grace to you and I right now, saying, 'Stop staring at the rearview mirror of your life, and finish well.'"



Glen Putman, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church, Jonesboro, speaks at the 2011 Arkansas Baptist State Convention Pastors' Conference.

Loritts explained that Paul's example of a runner in the 1 Corinthians passage shows three attributes that those who finish well possess – a radical excellence, a radical endurance and a radical integrity. These are related to the words "race," "compete" and "preach" in the chapter.

He ended by speaking on his legacy of finishing well that was passed down through his family for generations.

To those who don't have that legacy, he said, "Start one."

"Start a legacy of finishing well so that 150-plus years from now, your great-great-grandson is preaching at some convention, and he can (say), 'Let me tell you how it started. It began with my great-great-grandmama, my great-great-grandfather, saying, ... "We're going to follow Jesus. We're going to finish well.'"

Frank Page

How to experience victory in the midst of spiritual warfare was the message shared by Frank Page, president and chief operating officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

Page said a changed attitude is necessary for experiencing victory.

Beginning with 1 Samuel 17, which outlines a battle between the Israelites and the Philistines, Page said Saul and all the Israelites were "terrified and dismayed" by the taunts of the giant Goliath.

He said the Israelites' overwhelming attitude was one of defeat and lack of expectancy.

"Honestly, do we face giants like that today?" he asked. "The answer is, 'Yes.'"

Page said our enemy, Satan, has a "strategy" to destroy families, churches and lives.

Because of this attack, Page said, "We can adopt an attitude of defeat, of apathy, of fear."

However, Page said, there is another perspective found in 1 Chronicles 20. In this passage, the Israelites are once again fighting with the Philistines.

But the attitude of the Israelites in this passage is very different. Instead of terror, the Israelites kill giant after Philistine giant.

"It's as if everyone is in the giant-killing business," he said. "It's as if they lined up and said, 'I'm gonna kill me a giant today.'"

"When God's men and those who are leaders become giant-killers, God's people are going to follow," said Page.

"We need giant killers in this land."

Additional coverage of the ABSC Pastors' Conference is available online at www.arkansasbaptist.org.

ABN photo contest winners announced

LITTLE ROCK – The *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) has announced the winners of the 2011 ABN Photo Contest.

Tammy Albrecht of Second Baptist Church, Monticello, submitted the winning entry, which was taken on a mission trip to Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan. In the photo, a Native American girl is having her face painted at a block party.

“We pray that God used this event to begin to break down the barriers that stand between Christians and Native Americans and that, in a small way, they were able to experience His love through us,” Albrecht wrote in a narrative about the photograph.

Albrecht serves as pianist at Second Baptist and as office secretary for Bartholomew Baptist Association. She is the wife of Jimmy Albrecht, Second Baptist pastor.

Ketcher Montgomery of The New Tabernacle Baptist Mission, Dennard, submitted the second place entry, which depicts a man named Phil kneeling in prayer during an altar call at the new church start.

“Much like our church through all the hard blows of life, Phil knows that peace, comfort, joy, mercy and grace can be found at the foot of the cross,” wrote Montgomery in his narrative.

Montgomery is the son of Rick Montgomery, pastor of the church.

There was a tie for third place, with entries submitted by **Laura L. Davis of Cornerstone Fellowship Church, Hensley**, and **J. Stephen Ford of Central Baptist Church, Magnolia**.

Davis submitted a photograph of three teenagers silhouetted against a sunset after a day of preparing for a week of camp.

“It was the beginning of an inspiring week where we had nine kids saved and 31 people baptized in the lake. God is good, and we are blessed with this beautiful place to get our teens away (from) ‘the world’ for a week to get God’s Word in them,” wrote Davis.

Davis serves as evangelism council chairman at Cornerstone Fellowship.

Ford submitted a photograph of the Central Baptist Church bell tower reflected in a pool of water.

“The mirror effect caught my eye,” he wrote.

Ford serves as education minister, Sunday school director, vacation Bible school director and discipleship training director at Central Baptist.

“We are very pleased with our entries and the way they depict, not only the talent of our readers, but also the ministries in which they and their churches are involved,” said Tim Yarbrough, ABN editor.

Contest entries were judged by ABN staff members on image com-

First Place

Photo submitted by Tammy Albrecht, Second Baptist Church, Monticello



Second Place

Photo submitted by Ketcher Montgomery, The New Tabernacle Baptist Mission, Dennard



Third Place (tie)

Photo submitted by Laura L. Davis, Cornerstone Fellowship Church, Hensley

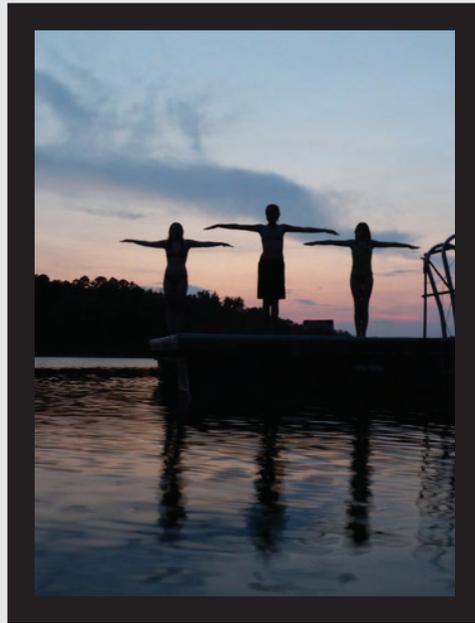
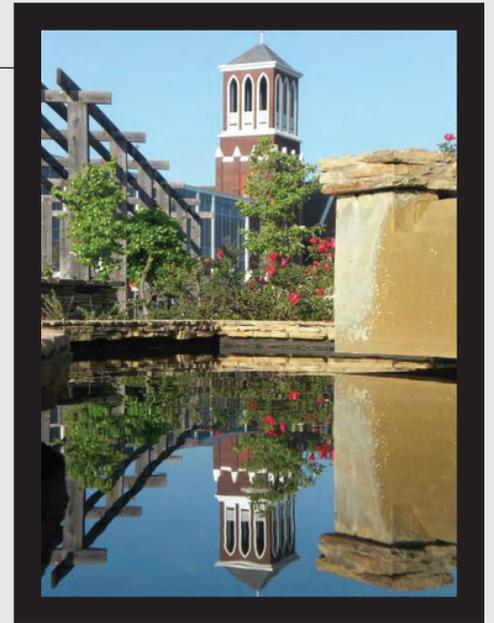


Photo submitted by J. Stephen Ford, Central Baptist Church, Magnolia



ABN online
To see a photo gallery of winners, go to www.arkansasbaptist.org

position, inspiration, image quality and the depiction of a missions or ministry event.

Prizes included gift cards for first

place (\$100), second place (\$50) and third place (\$25).

“We are excited about the success of our first photo contest, and

we look forward to learning more about our readers and their ministry involvement through next year’s contest entries,” said Yarbrough.

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Christmas: a joyous family celebration

CHRISTMAS IS A joyous time of year, filled with wonder and excitement.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the holidays, parents may be challenged to remain focused on the true meaning of the season – the celebration of Jesus’ birth.

Below are some celebration ideas for parents to consider.

Sing Christmas songs

- Play Christmas tapes or CDs, and sing along with the music.
- Play the music while driving in the car or after dinner for a family sing-along.

- Make up your own Christmas songs by using tunes to familiar songs. For example, to the tune “Mary had a Little Lamb,” sing, “Jesus was a Baby Boy, Baby Boy, Baby Boy. Jesus was a Baby Boy, a special Baby Boy.”

Use a non-breakable manger scene

- Choose a manger scene with figures that do not pose a choking hazard for preschoolers.
- Encourage your child to look at and handle the figures.
- Name the figures as your child is playing with the scene.
- Pray, thanking God for Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph.



Make Christmas wrapping paper

- Use plain shelf paper or large grocery sacks to make gift wrap paper.
- Purchase Christmas stamps and washable stamp pads at your local craft or discount store.
- Buy stamps that depict the symbols of Christmas, such as a star, an angel or an Advent wreath.
- Guide your child to press the stamp on the pad and then onto the paper or sacks. White paper lunch bags can be used to make gift bags.
- When stamping an angel design, tell your child, “An angel told the shepherds that Baby Jesus was born.”

Make an edible Christmas tree

- Gather the following ingredients: sugar ice cream cones, green frosting, candy-coated chocolate pieces and marshmallows.

Play the Christmas story

- Open the Bible to Luke 2 and tell the Christmas story.
- Let your family dress up in robes and play out the story.
- Use a shoe box for the manger and a doll for Baby Jesus.

One of the greatest gifts you can give your child is your time. Plan celebration times when your child is not tired, and remember too many activities can lead to stress.

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- Place a cone upside down on a plate. Guide your child to cover the cone with green frosting, using a plastic knife. Decorate the cone with the chocolate pieces. Then, top each cone with a marshmallow.
- Talk about the beautiful colors on the Christmas tree. Say, “I’m glad we can have fun at Christmas. At Christmastime, we think about the special Gift God gave us – Jesus.”
- Consider making another edible tree to give to a neighbor or elderly friend.

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Building dedication

First Baptist Church, Morrilton, dedicated a new family life center Oct. 2. The building was named the Bill Brown Family Life Center in honor of Bill Brown, pastor of the church for more than 20 years. Garry Atkinson (right), deacon, presented Brown with a plaque with the name of the building and the building committee members' names. Morning services were held in the family life center, followed by lunch.



Drama ministry

Jean Storey, a member of Refuge Baptist Church, Story, recently traveled to Brazil on a mission trip. The team spent the week in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, performing a Christian drama called "The Redeemer" in schools, churches, nursing homes and parks, as well as on the streets.

Happy Birthday!

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

- ◆ Dec. 1: Paul Spann, OBU Box 3456, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Madagascar.
- ◆ Dec. 3: Adam W., OBU Box 3919, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Middle East.
- ◆ Dec. 5: Evan M., OBU Box 3895, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Central Asia.
- ◆ Dec. 26: Jeneal Murphy, OBU Box 3610, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Ukraine.
- ◆ Dec. 27: Adam Webb, OBU Box 3338, Arkadelphia, AR 71998-0001; Indonesia.



CWJC celebrates new office space

The Fort Smith Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) recently held a ribbon cutting for its new office space located in the Fort Smith Executive Center at 320 North Greenwood. The Fort Smith site has ministered to more than 100 women this year. CWJC is a ministry of the Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.



Trunk-or-Treat

First Baptist Church, Lowell, held its 10th annual Trunk-or-Treat event Oct. 31. The event included food, drinks, candy, fire trucks to explore and a train to ride. About 2,000 children and adults attended, and three people made professions of faith in Christ.

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For details, itinerary, reservations and letter from your chaplain with his phone number call 7 days a week:

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Christmas for the troops

Members of Friendship Baptist Church, Sherwood, stuff envelopes with Christmas cards, Christian tracts and "cross pennies" (pennies with a cross cut out) to send to American servicemen and women serving in Afghanistan. Members of Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, Little Rock, also helped stuff cards. Angel Heart Ministry prayer warriors also helped with the project, signing and sending cards and providing pennies to be converted to cross pennies. About 12,000 cards will be distributed to two bases in Afghanistan during the week of Thanksgiving. Daren Carter, a member of Friendship Baptist Church, Sherwood, and Angel Heart Ministry leader, had the idea to send the cards to servicemen and women when fellow Friendship Baptist member, Jason Guillory, was deployed to Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. For more information about this ministry, go to www.angelheartministry.org.



Church recognizes World Hunger Month

Youth from Southside Baptist Church, Stuttgart, collected food from church members in the month of October for the local food bank in recognition of World Hunger Month. They also stocked the food for the food bank. In back, from left: Marianne Maynard, mayor of Stuttgart; Tricia Brown, student leader; and Haley Brown, Dylan Brown and Mari Bednar, all youth. In front, from left: Selby Tucker and Austin Ritze, both youth, and Cheney Idecker. *Photo by Darren Brown*



Blocktober Fest

Children and teens ride the Tornado at Blocktober Fest, a fall festival held by Cross Church in Northwest Arkansas Oct. 30-31. The event, which offers a "fun, safe environment for kids and families," included carnival rides, games and attractions, plus inflatable (bounce house) attractions, a rock climbing wall, a petting zoo and more, said Heath Bryant, the church's children's pastor. More than 6,500 people attended Blocktober Fest, with all three Cross Church campuses providing volunteers. Bryant said he is "thrilled" to have had the opportunity to minister to the people who attended the event. "Our prayer is that many will come to know Christ and hopefully get plugged in to our church, or at least some church, very soon," said Bryant. *Photo by Brian Armas*

Obituaries

William "Billy" Yates, 48, died Oct. 18. He served as the music minister at Cornerstone Baptist Church, West Memphis. He was preceded in death by his parents and one brother. He is survived by his son, Daniel; his wife, Kay; two brothers; and numerous nieces and nephews. A memorial service was held Oct. 22.

L.B. Atchison, 73, of Branson, Mo., died Nov. 2. Atchison was a Southern Baptist minister for more than 50 years. He pastored several churches in Arkansas, including Cross Road Baptist Church, Little Rock, and Berry Street Baptist Church, Springdale. He was a member of First Baptist Church, Branson, Mo. He was preceded in death by his parents and his first wife, De-

lores Atchison. Survivors include his wife, Ruby (Clark) Atchison; one daughter; two stepsons; three stepdaughters; 13 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Funeral services were held Nov. 7.

Church life

First Baptist Church, Hot Springs, will host Travis Cottrell

in concert at 6 p.m. Nov. 20. Visit www.womensministry-fbchs.org for more information.

Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Conway, will host "A Keyboard Christmas," with holiday music featuring five grand pianos and 10 keyboardists, at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Dec. 4.

Pam Sims, author and staff member at **Second Baptist Church, Conway**, will hold a book signing at Christian Book Outlet in Conway Nov. 19 for her book "Making Designing Women Out of Desperate Housewives." Sims is founder of Women of the Word Ministries.

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For more information or to sign up, please contact Becky at 800-838-2272 (in state) or in Little Rock at 501-376-4791, ext. 5156.

Arkansas Baptist agencies, institutions report

LITTLE ROCK – Arkansas Baptist agencies and institutions gave messengers glimpses of ministry opportunities during the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Annual Meeting held Nov. 1-2 at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Arkansas Baptist Assembly – Camp Siloam

In his report, Jason Wilkie, executive director for Camp Siloam, also known as Arkansas Baptist Assembly, said the collaboration between the camp, the ABSC and agencies allows for the expansion of ministry.

Wilkie addressed the issue of whether or not camping is still relevant. He pointed out that many biblical heroes went into nature to hear God. He said as more people move to cities, he believes camping will be more relevant as people “seek to dialogue with God.”

Wilkie said camp attendance was up this past summer for the first time in 10 years, with more than 3,600 campers in attendance. More than 400 decisions were made, with more than 200 of them being decisions for salvation.

In addition, Camp Siloam is hiring a new program director.

Wilkie said one of the goals is to keep camp affordable, and Cooperative Program gifts help make this possible.

ABCHomes

According to Psalm 84:3a, “Even the sparrow has found a home.”

That’s why the ministry of the Arkansas Baptist Children’s Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes) is so important – it provides children a place to call home.

In his report, David Perry, ABCHomes executive director, said, “Many of the children that come into our care at the children’s home, boys ranch or one of our emergency shelters are looking for a place to call home.

“Like the sparrow, they are seeking a place of affection, security, refuge and rest,” he said.

“For 117 years, Arkansas Baptist children’s homes have been providing places to call home for thousands of children.”

Perry said 78 children called the Arkansas Baptist Home for Children in Monticello “home” last year. At the Arkansas Baptist Boys Ranch, another 43 boys had a home. What’s more, Perry noted that 42 children “found an eternal place to call home as they accepted Christ as Savior.”

Perry added that another important aspect of the ABCHomes ministry is the Promise House Maternity Home, a home for pregnant preteens and teenagers, which marks its 20th anniversary this year.

Arkansas Faith and Ethics Council

Larry Page, executive director of the Arkansas Faith and Ethics



Miss Arkansas 2011, Kristen Glover, speaks during the ABC Homes report.

Council (AFEC), shared with messengers how the AFEC has been at work and the services it offers.

He said in the legislative session this year the AFEC had “important victories ... in the area of alcohol,” which is an important issue for the council since it began as the Anti-Saloon League of Arkansas in 1899.

Efforts against abortion, gambling (including the lottery) and pornography were not as productive, though some positive bills were passed.

Page also described other ways the AFEC serves, which include trying to establish a coalition of pro-life groups, helping groups keep inappropriate stores out of communities, fighting private clubs in dry counties, counseling people on various issues and offering conferences.

He also said the agency has a new phone number, email address and website. He explained the website addresses 10 issues – alcohol and other drugs, religious liberty, children at risk, homosexual agenda and more – with resources like fact sheets, articles and links about each issue.

“Look, we need to care for the people who are hurting,” said Page. “We need to nurse them back to health. But think how much more effective it is when we can prevent the harm in the first place. That’s what public policy issues are about.”

Arkansas Baptist Foundation

David Moore, president of the Arkansas Baptist Foundation (ABF), addressed the Foundation’s views regarding the economy and the future in his report.

Moore said he believes that eternal things will be worth “everything,” while financial things, such as bonds and stocks will “ultimately be worth nothing.”

He also pointed out some short-term concerns regarding world economic situations.

“I do remind you, however, that

our confidence is not in the economy. It’s in God,” Moore told messengers. “And we would encourage you to keep fixing your eyes on Jesus and not on the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*.”

Moore summarized last year’s numbers, saying the ABF grew by about \$14.5 million. It was one of the best contribution years, and they were able to distribute more than \$14 million. He explained that 68.5 percent went to ABSC entities, 4 percent went to the Southern Baptist Convention, 2 percent went to other Baptist colleges and seminaries, 7 percent went to other ministries, 0.5 percent went to other charities and 18 percent went to individuals.

He also noted the Foundation was the 13th largest contributor to the Cooperative Program and he hopes to eventually be the largest.

He also pointed to more specific examples of where the money went, but as to whether it made an impact, Moore said, “The bottom line is, truthfully, only eternity will know the answer to that question. But I ... represent a group of professional people and support staff in our office who work very hard for you because we believe what we’re doing is making a difference in the kingdom of God.”

Arkansas Baptist News

Tim Yarbrough, editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News*, thanked messengers for their support and urged non-subscribers to give the paper another look, during his report.

He also highlighted several changes the newspaper has undergone in the past year. These changes include a new digital edition, a revised logo, a new slogan, more Arkansas Baptist-centric news and shorter, more concise stories.

In addition, the ABN launched a new website in September that includes bonus content.

The ABN currently features more special sections than at any

other time in recent history, noted Yarbrough. These sections have included Student/Youth Ministry, Travel, Church Building and Facilities, a Christian Education Guide and more.

“The bottom line is that the staff of the ABN is working hard to better report on and communicate the activity of God among His people known as Arkansas Baptists,” said Yarbrough.

Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita Baptist University is celebrating one of its largest freshman classes ever – in a year that also marks the institution’s 125th anniversary – Rex Horne, Ouachita president, said in his report.

“Our enrollment this fall is 1,594,” said Horne, “We are up 6 percent from last year. 2010 was up 4 percent from 2009. You will find it interesting that 54 percent of our students are from Arkansas, 30 percent from Texas. Seventy-five percent of our current students are Baptists.”

A strong indication of Ouachita’s ongoing emphasis on the Great Commission is the number of International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries who are graduates of the university.

“Of the present personnel of the IMB, only one college (Oklahoma Baptist University) has more graduates serving than Ouachita,” said Horne. “To show the continuing trend, in the last five years, no college has had more graduates appointed than Ouachita.”

Horne said, “Arkansas Baptists can be proud of a 125-year-old university that is unapologetically Christian, proudly Baptist and whose students’ commitment to missions is unequalled.”

Williams Baptist College

Tremendous strides have been made in the ministry at Williams Baptist College during the 70 years of the institution’s existence, said Jerol Swaim, president.

Started in 1941 as Southern Baptist College, Williams was renamed for its founder, H.E. Williams, in 1991.

Milestones Swaim shared included Williams becoming a four-year college in 1984, the growth of the school’s academic programs, construction of Manley Chapel, a new administrative building and Nicholas Hall, its newest residence hall for women.

Swaim said while buildings and academic programs at the college are important, there’s another thing that makes Williams special for its students.

“But the thing that makes their Williams education special is that just as they are growing academically, they are also challenged to grow spiritually,” he said.

“The brightest days for WBC still lie ahead of us.”

Ministers' wives reflect on ministry 'adventures'

LITTLE ROCK – Life in ministry can be, well, “an adventure.” At least that’s how Susie Thompson, wife of Concord Baptist Association Missionary Jeff Thompson, sees it.

From her own childhood as a minister’s daughter to her life now as a mother and minister’s wife, she has seen her share of adventures, and she took time to share her humorous stories with fellow ministers’ wives at the 2011 Ministers Wives Conference held Oct. 31 at First Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Julie Beavers, Ministers Wives Network leadership team member and member of First Baptist Church, Star City, explained that in the past, the annual conference has focused on the trials of life in ministry, but this year was different. With the theme Ministry Life ... Un-

scripted, it focused on the upbeat.

The room was transformed with fall decor by Sheila Stadler, Ministers Wives Network leadership team member and member at Fianna Hills Baptist Church, Fort Smith.

The conference began with an introduction by Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Director Emil Turner and was followed by testimonies from Thompson; Nita Moore, wife of former ABSC Executive Director Don Moore; and others.

The testimonies were interspersed with games; worship, led by Jill Pucik and Natalie Culver, both seniors at Williams Baptist College; and skits performed by Jana McKnight of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, and Vickey Lloyd of University Baptist Church, Fayette-



Ministers Wives Network leadership team members, from left: Dana Baker, First Baptist Church, Charleston; Michelle Conner, Park Hill Baptist Church, North Little Rock; Sheila Stadler, Fianna Hills Baptist Church, Fort Smith; Sherrill Moffett, First Baptist Church, Pocahontas; Ann Hibbard, First Baptist Church, Almyra; and Julie Beavers, First Baptist Church, Star City.

ville. McKnight and Lloyd kept the audience in stitches as they assumed the roles of Miss Bertha Louise Cooper and Berniece the Cleaning Lady during their skits.

“We just wanted it to be encouraging and uplifting, a time for them to be able to laugh and rejoice. We’re to ‘rejoice in the Lord always,’” said Beavers, quoting Philippians 4:4.

ABSC missions ministries focus: Acts 1:8

LITTLE ROCK – “The Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) missions ministries team wants to ‘come alongside’ churches to impact the ends of the earth,” said Robby Tingle, ABSC missions ministries team leader, in the State Missions Report at the annual meeting.

“We want to support and encourage you,” he continued, noting the team bases its ministry on Acts 1:8, seeking to reach Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the world.

Tingle interviewed several people who have been involved in missions in Arkansas. They included Hunter Thompson, a student at the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith who served as a Kaleo student summer missionary; Aaron Harvey, a Ouachita Baptist University graduate who serves as a church planter in Philadelphia; Dave White, associational missionary for Greene County Baptist Association; and James Bell, a church planter who has started Victory Ministries in Clarksville.

Thompson shared how his time as a Kaleo student summer missionary helped shape his call to

ministry, while Harvey invited Arkansas Baptists to join him to minister in Philadelphia.

“God is on a move of multiplication,” Harvey said.

White shared how churches affiliated with Greene County Baptist Association rose from 275 baptisms to 400 in two years. He attributed the increase in baptisms to the glory of God and to the fact that more people in churches in the association have become involved in missions. White believes the increase in mission involvement “wouldn’t have happened” without the support of the Dixie Jackson Arkansas Missions Offering and the ABSC missions ministries team.

“They got involved in our association, and it has been very effective to the work of the Lord,” he said.

Tingle said the missions ministries team would be “delighted” to share with those who are interested about how to become “involved and engaged in ministry” in Arkansas.

Bell shared about the new mission, Victory

Ministries, in Clarksville, which began meeting on the campus of the University of the Ozarks in March. During the first service, two people in attendance “came running to the altar, screaming and crying, asking, ‘What must I do to be saved?’”

The Clarksville church start has baptized 46 new believers and has grown from 10 members to 160, said Bell.

In addition, Tingle noted that God is continuing to move in Kansas and Nebraska, where Arkansas Baptists have been involved for a number of years, working alongside churches in those states.

Tingle also explained how God at work regarding urban church planting in Arkansas.

“Because of your support of the Cooperative Program, we are going to see five brand-new (urban) churches started for the kingdom of God,” he said, noting the team is working with churches to develop a strategy to reach urban areas in Arkansas.

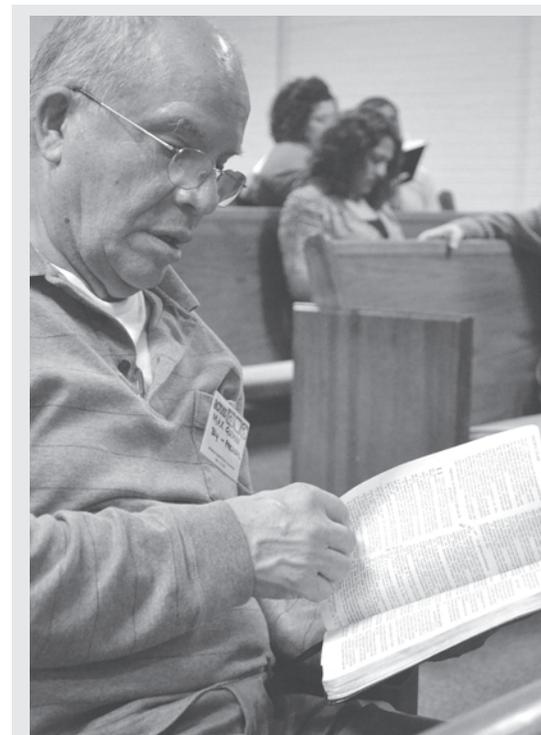
To close the report, Emil Turner, ABSC executive director, prayed for church planters involved in ministry in Arkansas.



Bell

the work of the Lord,” he said. Tingle said the missions ministries team would be “delighted” to share with those who are interested about how to become “involved and engaged in ministry” in Arkansas.

Bell shared about the new mission, Victory



Max Guzman, pastor of Iglesia Bautista, Blytheville, reads the Bible during the Hispanic Baptist Fellowship meeting held Oct. 31 just prior to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC) Annual Meeting.



Arkansas Baptist State Convention Annual Meeting

2012 ABSC officers are Ken Jerome (left), first vice president and intentional interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville; Greg Addison (center), president and pastor of First Baptist Church, Cabot; and Matt Pryor, second vice president and pastor of First Baptist Church, Wooster.



Arkansas Master Singers perform during the ABSC Annual Meeting.



Mark your calendar

**State Conference
on Evangelism and
Church Growth**
Jan. 23-24

First Baptist Church
Sherwood

PraizFest
Feb. 24-25

Geyer Springs First Baptist
Church, Little Rock

YEC

Youth Evangelism
Conference

March 30-31

Statehouse Convention
Center, Little Rock

JoyWorks
June 26-29

Mission Connection set for 2012

LOOKING FOR A WAY to be a part of mission opportunities in Arkansas, across the nation and internationally?

Mission Connection may be for you.

Mission Connection, which participants may attend on either Feb. 9 or Feb. 11 at Second Baptist

Church, Jacksonville, is a one-day event for anyone interested in connecting with state, national and international mission partners.

Connect with international mission partners from Belgium, Chile, Japan and Russia, along with North American mission partners from Alaska, Chicago, Kansas, Nebraska,

Philadelphia and South Dakota.

Mission representatives from Arkansas will be available, as well.

The conference will be held from 9:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and includes lunch.

To register, go to www.absc.org/uttermost, or call Jill Modlin at 800-838-2272, ext. 5149.

Student Missions Roundtable dates set

WHAT SHOULD I do to lead students to adopt a biblical missions lifestyle? How do I lead my students to take the gospel into their schools? How do I choose where to go on a mission trip? How do I finance mission trips? Is an in-state mission trip really that helpful? When is a student ready for an international

trip? Can my group adopt a church planter or missionary?

Answers will be provided to these questions and more at the Student Missions Roundtable, a free conference for full-time, part-time or volunteer adult leaders of students in Arkansas Baptist churches.

Participants can choose from

identical conferences on either Thursday, Dec. 1 or Saturday, Dec. 3. The meeting will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Arkansas Baptist State Convention building, located at 10 Remington Drive in Little Rock.

For more information or to register, go to www.absc.org/uttermost.



Literacy conference

About 35 people attended the Literacy Missions Training Workshop held Oct. 30 at Baring Cross Baptist Church, Sherwood. The conference featured workshops such as "English as a Second Language," "Tutoring Youth and Children" and "Adult Reading and Writing." George Box, pastor of Bellefonte Baptist Church, Harrison, listens as Maria Teel teaches the "Adult Reading and Writing" workshop.

Classifieds

PASTOR

Vimy Ridge Immanuel is looking for a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to 12214 Germana Road, Alexander, AR 72002.

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

Cherry Street Baptist Church is currently seeking a **pastor**. CSBC is located in Clarksville, Ark., a city of 9,600 residents in Johnson County, where over 19,000 people reside. We have a loving, Christ-centered congregation and a beautiful sanctuary with a Sunday morning attendance of over 40. Our sanctuary accommodates approximately 250. We also have many classrooms to accommodate growth. The pastor's salary is \$40,000, plus a two-bedroom parsonage located next to CSBC. The University of Ozarks and downtown Clarksville are three blocks from CSBC. Staff includes a part-time secretary, nursery worker and custodian. We are praying for a God-called pastor who is willing to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit in a variety of possible ministries. Send resumes to P.O. Box 378, Clarksville, AR 72830 or dstandri@suddenlink.net.

Splitlog Baptist Church is currently seeking a **full-time pastor**. Country church setting with approximately 175 active members with a large children's ministry. We are mission-minded with emphasis in local and foreign fields. Accepting resumes through Nov. 30, 2011, at Splitlog Baptist Church,

3666 Splitlog Road, Goodman, MO 64843 or by email at crowfab@joplin.com. Inquires can be made to the church at 417-364-7458. For more information about our church, you can go to www.splitlogbaptist.org.

Armored Baptist Church, near Blytheville, Ark., is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please prayerfully send resume to paultross72@yahoo.com or mail to Armored Baptist Church, Attention: Pastor Search Committee, P.O. Box 68, Armored, AR 72310.

New Hope Baptist Church, Jay, Okla., is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resume to NHBC, P.O. Box 1846, Jay, OK 74346, or email to info@newhopejay.com. Phone: 918-253-3985. Web: www.newhopejay.com.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

Bi-vocational youth minister: Valley View Baptist Church, Eureka Springs, Ark., is seeking an individual with a heart to reach lost youth. Great opportunity to build a youth program in a small town with a diverse culture. Send resumes to above address, or email vvbc@cox.net.

First Baptist Church in Thayer, Mo., is seeking a **full-time associate pastor and minister of youth**. Must have experience in youth ministry and a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a related field. Must be self-motivated and be willing to assist the pastor and direct spiritual needs of the church. Good salary accompanies this position. Send resumes to fbcrejoice@centurytel.net, fax to 417-264-2854 or mail to P.O. Box 43, Thayer, MO 65791. Respond by Dec. 5. Office number: 417-264-3403.

Oak Ridge Baptist Church is currently seeking a

part-time worship leader. If interested, send resume to 11998 State Hwy. 9 E., Eufaula, OK 74432, or email it to oakridgedesk@yahoo.com.

Sugarloaf Baptist Church of Heber Springs, Ark., is currently accepting resumes for a **full-time minister of youth**. Please mail resumes and photo to 699 Wilburn Road, Heber Springs, AR 72543, or email to sugarloafbaptistchurch@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church of Paris, Ark., is seeking a **full- or part-time youth minister**. Send resumes to First Baptist Church Personnel Committee at P.O. Box 567, Paris, AR 72855 or to jshearhart@parisfbc.com by Nov. 18. Please indicate on resume the desire for the full- or part-time position.

First Baptist Church of Siloam Springs, Ark., is looking for a **full-time children's minister** to lead an exciting and growing children's ministry. Please send resumes and inquiries to Search Committee, 2000 Dawn Hill Road, Siloam Springs, AR 72761, or email to office@fbc-siloam.com.

Formosa Baptist Church in Clinton, Ark., is seeking a **bi-vocational worship leader** for blended service. Contact Pastor Billy Reece, 501-253-1204, or email resume to billytreece@hotmail.com.

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

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

Part-time children's and preschool minister: oversight of a comprehensive children's

program that will promote spiritual and personal growth among children and their families. Submit application, resume and three professional references to First Baptist Church, c/o Personnel Committee, 207 E. Washington, Kirksville, MO 63501 or children@fbckvmo.org. More details can be found at www.fbckvmo.org.

West Rock Baptist Church in Little Rock is seeking a **bi-vocational minister of music**. Send resume to West Rock Baptist Church, 14601 Cantrell Road, Little Rock, AR 72223, or call 501-680-2760.

First Baptist, Trumann, Ark., is seeking a **part-time youth minister**. Send resume to First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 575, Trumann, AR 72472.

Bi-vocational youth director needed. Contact River Road Baptist, P.O. Box 161, Redfield, AR 72132, 501-397-2576 or 870-536-4109.

MISCELLANEOUS

College students — Do you have summer plans? Consider spending **eight weeks on mission in the Philippines**, working with the student ministries of the University Baptist Church of Manila. This exciting opportunity will be a life-changing event for you and for the Filipino students that you will work with. For more information, contact Ralph Baker, Atkins FBC music minister, at 501-757-0978 or rmbaker58@yahoo.com.

FOR RENT OR SALE — Beautiful Gulf-front two-bedroom condominium in Ft. Walton Beach, Fla. Great time of the year for the beach. Low owner rates. Call Lucy: 770-831-3651; email Lucyclark9@aol.com.

Does your life speak well of God?

Some of the most inspired times of my life have come after I've studied or observed another fervent Christ follower.

Immersing myself in the writings of spiritual giants reminds me of the godly characteristics I yearn to have in my daily walk with God. I want to be like them, act like them and affect others as they have. I am reassured of the unchangeable nature of the King of kings, as well as His desire to make me powerful for His kingdom work.

I once read that people who have changed the world for Christ have several things in common. Al-

though I can't recall them all, two of the traits linger in my mind. The first characteristic of a godly world changer is very predictable - the individual must have passion. Passion. Of course. Very predictable. The second common trait of many godly world changers is that they were often in trouble. A Christian who is a troublemaker? How does that fit with Romans 15:1-2?

In the Book of Romans, Paul spends a considerable amount of time exhorting us to be peaceable and respectful - not just to each other, but to all people, including the government. Living in unity al-

lows us to hopefully establish trust with unbelievers and assist them in seeing Christ through our actions (Rom. 15:6). I fear, however, that we often get unity mixed up with comfort.

The inspiring missionaries, preachers, martyrs and historical figures throughout history are for all things that bring Christ glory. They create avenues for ministry to the unbelievers, physi-

cally weak and emotionally hurting. However, spiritual-rule-following troublemakers resist traditions that are no longer useful (Rom. 14:14). They recognize that their strength is for service, not status.

Rule-following troublemakers incorporate the characteristics that Paul writes about in Romans while diving headlong into situations that make others uncomfortable. Isn't that what Jesus did?

EXPLORE THE BIBLE NOVEMBER 27, 2011

Becky Russell
member
Bayou Meto Baptist Church,
Jacksonville
Scripture passage:
Romans 15:1-16:27

I spent 20 years in manufacturing management. The machinery sometimes was an issue, but more

often, it was the people. I came to realize that in dealing with people, perception is reality. Just as a person who sees a mirage acts improperly, so it is with people who have a skewed perception of themselves and God.

Today's passages in Deuteronomy 32 are Moses' swan song. It is at the

end of this song that Moses goes to the mountain to die without entering the Promised Land. Let's consider

the song, the singer and the song's purpose. I think we will see that Moses had the proper perspective on his life and God's purpose for him.

The song praises the greatness of God, His justice, His goodness and His love for His people. The song also talks of the people Moses has

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE NOVEMBER 27, 2011

Marc Reeves
pastor
West View Baptist Church,
Paragould

Scripture passages:
Deut. 32:1-9, 36-39, 43

Stay true to your commitments

It is easy to become so involved in some activity that we lose sight of the big picture. As a pastor's wife of more than 43 years, I have been privileged to attend church regularly. Sometimes as I hurried to get our two children fed, dressed and out the door, I lost sight of the object of our Sunday preparations. I found myself fretting over details, rather than anticipating worship.

We read in Numbers of the Israelite people being organized for possessing the Promised Land, for moving and living together as a group and for worship. It is important to note that God provided organiza-

tion and order to a group of newly freed slaves. These were folks who were accustomed to being ordered about, not planning for themselves. By providing instructions, God demonstrated His great love and commitment to care for His people.

This detailed instruction led His people to consistent behavior, helping them keep their commitment to Him. In just the same way, Bible study, church attendance, regular prayer times and fellowship with godly friends help us stay faithful in our commitment to God.

When I was teaching preschool, I learned that a child cannot create

order, but he or she can reproduce it. I would put photos of toys on the shelves where they belonged so

when the children cleaned up, all they had to do was find the picture of the toy to put it away. In like manner, God gave the Israelites instructions for life and worship. But there is danger in getting caught up in the details. Am I more concerned with how the flowers are arranged than

whether they add to an atmosphere of worship? Does it become so important to sing verses one, three

and five that I forget this song is to move my heart to repentance and worship? Am I keeping sight of the big picture - having an encounter with Jesus? As we near the celebration of Christ's birth, let

us stay true to our commitment to Him.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE DECEMBER 4, 2011

Mary Kisor
member
First Baptist Church,
Dardanelle
Scripture passage:
Numbers 1:1-8:26

Those attending Christmas parties may participate in a white elephant gift exchange. This experience includes having to choose a wrapped gift without knowing what is inside the box. The ability to recognize the gifts would certainly change a player's choice. Likewise, recognizing what God has given us through the Gift of Jesus would encourage many to respond to Him.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE DECEMBER 4, 2011

David Bond
team member
Arkansas Baptist State Convention
Little Rock

Scripture passages:
John 1:1-4, 10-18

John 1 invites us to recognize the unique attributes that elevate Jesus above every other name, authority or religious figure. As the Word, Jesus reveals God in a way that people can understand and receive (John 1:1a).

As God Himself, Jesus is uniquely able, through His death on the cross, to demonstrate both the love of God for sinners and the judgment of God

on sin (John 1:1b; Rom. 5:8-10). As Creator, Jesus is eternal and in complete authority over all things (John 1:2-3). No other person or religious figure makes such claims. Jesus is a unique Gift indeed!

The Bible also calls us to recognize the results of receiving the Gift of Jesus. Ephesians reminds us that because life is in Him, we who are dead in our sins can be made alive with Jesus (Eph. 2:1-5). The life of Jesus is also the light of men. The Gift of Jesus includes the power to cease walking in darkness and enjoy walking in light, which includes both freedom from sin and fellowship with other believers (1

John 1:7). No other gift promises so much change.

Finally, John 1 reminds us to recognize that the Gift of Jesus must be received. Even when Christ was on the earth, there were those who did not receive Him (John 1:10-11). They missed their opportunity to receive the greatest Gift of all. But those who do receive the Gift of Jesus become children of God and live to testify to the fullness of His glory, grace and truth (John 1:12, 16). When you recognize a desirable gift, you must reach for it or risk losing it. Having recognized the supreme value of Jesus, reach out and receive Him today.

Recognize God's Gift

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Annual meeting
Arkansas Baptist State
Convention Annual
Meeting coverage.

PAGE 1

Lomax new DOM
Washington Madison
Baptist Association names
director of missions.

PAGE 1



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- See list in the shaded box below for church plan descriptions.
- Attached is a list of the names and addresses of members who want to subscribe.
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Mailing Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

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The *Arkansas Baptist News* offers subscription plans at three rates for the printed edition and three rates for the *ABN Now*, the digital edition:

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

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

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

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Individual subscriptions for both editions may be purchased at www.arkansasbaptist.org. Please call the *ABN* office to discuss church plans.

Photo by Tammy Albrecht, first place winner of ABN Photo Contest



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