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Cabot runner reaches goal:

'Made perfect in weakness'

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

CABOT – “Anyone who knows me knows I love to run,” said Laranda Burrow. “It’s just something in my blood.”

Laranda, a speech and language pathologist for Bayou Meto Elementary School in Jacksonville, started running in college as a way to exercise and relieve stress, but it soon turned into a passion. Running a marathon in another country was on the top of her bucket list.

“Running is Laranda’s escape,” said Donnie Burrow, Laranda’s husband and next generation pastor at First Baptist Church, Cabot. “I think she likes to run because it’s an hour that is just for her. She has a pretty stressful job, so she enjoys her time of running and working out as a way to unwind after work.”

First setback

Laranda Burrow continued to run and train over the next years to reach her goal, but it came to a stop in 2014 when she started having lower back and hip pain. She was diagnosed with scoliosis and was told she shouldn’t run again.

“You’re saying I can’t run anymore?” Laranda Burrow asked the doctor.

“Well, let’s just say if you were a racehorse, I wouldn’t bet any money on you,” the doctor replied.

For the next two years, Laranda Burrow sought help and advice from other professionals. Her new goal was to get her body back to where she could safely run.

She tried Rolf therapy, a mix between physical therapy and a massage that releases muscle tissue that has been bound or constricted by repeated trauma or injury. The relief was temporary, and treatments were expensive.

Laranda Burrow’s back began to hurt all the time, and she began having trouble doing everyday chores.

“While I’ll admit that there was still a tiny glimmer of hope somewhere in the back of my mind, the dream of ever running an actual race again seemed about as realistic as wishing I’d be a princess one day,” said Laranda Burrow.

At the end of 2017, Laranda Burrow was about to turn 40. She was in pain most of the time and was unhappy. The despair from being told she couldn’t run evolved into resentment and disgruntlement.

“I think it was this frustration that eventually spurred me into action,” said Laranda Burrow. “One day, I finally woke up and said, ‘To heck with what the doctors and everyone said. I’m running anyway!’”

She began running again and felt that happiness she once had come back.

“It didn’t matter that I was slow or couldn’t run as far as I



Laranda and Donnie Burrow pose for a photo at the finish line of the Tralee Harriers Half-Marathon in Tralee, Ireland. Laranda Burrow finished the half-marathon – a long-held goal of hers – in spite of numerous health-related setbacks. She credits God for giving her the strength to run. Donnie Burrow, Laranda’s husband, serves as next generation pastor at First Baptist Church, Cabot.

had before. I was just happy to be moving again,” she said.

After a month of running, she noticed she was having a lot of trouble breathing.

“In retrospect, I should have stopped and gone back home,” said Laranda Burrow. “But I was 40, and I was stubborn.”

Laranda Burrow began to cry as she continued to run the route she ran days before without any problem before making it back home. She hid in

a dark area of her yard so her husband and children could not see her.

“I remember wondering why something couldn’t just go right in my life,” said Laranda Burrow. “I looked up into the stars as if they were the face of God, and I cried my eyes out. I could smell defeat all over me. I felt like such a has-been.

“I remember feeling like my life as I’d imagined was over.

See **PERFECT** page 8

Nick Floyd nominated to lead Cross Church

SPRINGDALE – Nick Floyd has been nominated as senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, the church’s board of directors announced to the congregation on Sunday, April 14.

A vote will be held in each service at Cross Church’s four campuses on Sunday, April 28.

Floyd, 35, if approved by Cross Church members, would succeed his father, Ronnie Floyd, who was elected as president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) Executive Committee during a special meeting April 2 in Dallas.



Floyd

Ronnie Floyd, now in his 33rd year at Cross Church, resigned as senior pastor the following Sunday, April 7, and will conclude his ministry at the church May 19.

Nick Floyd has been the lead teaching pastor for Cross Church’s Fayetteville campus since its launch in January 2011. The Fayetteville campus has grown from an average of 1,280 in attendance during its first six months in 2011 to an average of 2,786 to date in 2019, with more than 2,100 total baptisms.

Nick Floyd also serves as staff leader for Cross Church, which has given

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ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

IMB VP of communications resigns two months into role

RICHMOND, Va. – After two months on the job in the newly created role of vice president for communications at the International Mission Board (IMB), Roger Alford has left the position.

IMB President Paul Chitwood announced Alford's departure in a March 29 staff email.

"Roger Alford has let me know that he feels that he's not the right fit for the new communications role we were hoping to fashion and will not be serving with us. We will continue the process of evaluating that part of our work and seeking to create an organizational strategy to ensure we are able to tell the amazing stories of hope being shared with the world," said Chitwood, according to IMB public relations manager Julie McGowan.

Alford was the first to serve in the newly created role of vice president for communications, a position "designed to build and maintain an optimum communications approach, operation and staff to best serve the needs of IMB and the Southern Baptist Convention," according to a Feb. 12 IMB news release.

Alford, a career journalist, previously served five years as the communications director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention and editor of Kentucky Today, a news website he created for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Alford's move to the IMB was thought to signal a renewed focus on the organization's communications team, which was drastically reduced in 2016 under former IMB President David Platt. The IMB's Richmond Communications Center closed in 2016, resulting in the termination of 30 IMB staff members.

Story originally published at thealabamabaptist.org.

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

SWBTS removes conservative resurgence stained glass

FORT WORTH, Texas – Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) has relocated more than 40 stained glass windows commemorating leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) conservative resurgence from its J.W. MacGorman Chapel.

A letter dated April 3 sent to "ministry partners" of Southwestern, and signed by Kevin Ueckert, chairman of the seminary's board of trustees, said:

"After much prayerful consideration and discussion, we have concluded that it is in the best interest of the institution to remove and relocate the stained-glass windows installed in our J.W. MacGorman Chapel and Performing Arts Center. Expenses to remove the windows are minimal and will be covered by the seminary. ... The seminary will safely store the windows until we have a chance to discuss with you the next steps."

The windows, the first of which date back to 2013, were part of the vision of Dorothy Patterson, wife of former SWBTS President Paige Patterson.

"My dream was to portray the 20-year history of the conservative resurgence of the Southern Baptist church," Dorothy Patterson told the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* in 2013. "I really hope the public will have an interest and want to come and see. ... I'm proud of this for Fort Worth. I think it's pretty unique for Paige's hometown."

"In order to pass along the story of the SBC's Conservative Resurgence, Southwestern has dedicated stained-glass windows in MacGorman Chapel to those who played a major role in turning the convention back to a high view of Scripture," reads a 2015 SWBTS press release regarding the project.

Southwestern has stated no official reason for the windows' removal and relocation.

"We are working with donors on future plans for the windows," Colby Adams, SWBTS vice president for strategic initiatives, said April 15.

Jimmy Draper, chairman of the Southwestern Advisory Council, is one of dozens of leaders the windows depict. He said April 15 that the windows' removal and planned relocation are likely aimed at appropriately honoring a portion of SWBTS history.

"There has been such a sense that we needed to change the windows, that has existed for at least a year," Draper, SBC Executive Committee presidential ambassador and president emeritus of LifeWay Christian Resources, said.

The J.W. MacGorman Chapel and Performing Arts Center has become a campus centerpiece, he said, and is probably not the best place to spotlight a small segment of the school's history.

"I have mixed feelings about that, because I think the Conservative Resurgence was a very significant part of Southern Baptist life, but it was only ... two decades, really, of the 111-year history of the school," Draper said. "I do understand that. I'm not upset about" the windows' relocation.

Draper is confident the windows will be appropriately relocated, he said.

"I've not had any conversations with anybody about what the future of them may be," he said of the windows, "but they're not being destroyed by any means."

The conservative resurgence "was a unique period of time that we don't want people to forget, but it needs to be remembered in an appropriate way," Draper said, "and I feel that certainly the people involved will find a way to do

that and we'll move forward. I don't think it's something we need to get sidetracked on or distressed over."

Depicted on the windows are various deceased and living leaders and supporters of the period in the Southern Baptist Convention that promoted biblical inerrancy and truth.

Baptist Press identified the windows by the window titles on the website of Don Young Glass Studio, the windows' creator and installer. Many windows honor more than one person. A gallery of the windows can be viewed at dyglassstudio.com/religious.

The windows are titled, in the order listed at dyglassstudio.com: Dr. Huber L. Drumwright, Jr.; Dr. Rick Warren; Dottie Riley; O.S. and Susie Cavness Hawkins; Judge Paul and Nancy Avery Pressler; Dr. W.A. Criswell and Jack Pogue; Andy and Joan Horner; Charles F. Stanley; Bailey Smith and Adrian Rogers; H. Edwin Young; J. Gerald Harris and Dana Walter Collett; Jimmy and Carol Ann Draper; T.C. "Tommy" French, Jr. and James W. "Jim" Richards; and Robert G. "Bobby" Lambeth and Phoebe McAuley Lambeth.

Titles continue as Harold (Preacher) O'Chester and Barbara O'Chester; Dr. Jerry Vines; Brumbelow Family; Robert Tenery and Jerry Sutton; Fred Powell and Thomas C. Pinckney; Lollie Cogswell and Lou Brooks; Bill Harrell and Rev. Danny E. Watters; Paige and Dorothy Kelley Patterson; Rev. Dr. Richard Land and Dr. Barry McCarty; Joe W. Atchison and Pastor Simon Hon-leung Tsoi; Morris Chap-



man and Dr. Frank S. Page; Dr. Homer G. Lindsey, Jr. and Dr. Johnny M. Hunt; Jerry Falwell and Ronnie Floyd; Ken Whitten and Jimmy E. Jackson; Charles S. (Chuck) Kelley; Gary and Tammi Ledbetter; Dr. John L. Yeats and Dr. Jim Wells; and Pastor Ron E. Wilson and Dr. Jay Strack.

Story compiled using Baptist Press, *The Alabama Baptist* and *Arkansas Baptist News* reports.

FLOYD

continued from page one

\$1 million or more through SBC Cooperative Program channels for state, national and international missions and ministry since 2015, according to convention data.

Nick Floyd has been the University of Arkansas football team chaplain since 2014, a member of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention Executive Board since 2014 and a trustee of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., since 2012. He also

served on the 2017-18 SBC Evangelism Task Force and the Executive Committee's Young Leaders Advisory Council.

Floyd earned a doctor of ministry degree from Liberty University's School of Divinity in 2010 as well as an undergraduate degree at the Lynchburg, Va., campus in 2005. He also earned a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, in 2007.

Floyd and his wife Meredith, also a Liberty graduate, have four children, ages 4 to 11.

Reactions to SWBTS' stained glass window removal

"Such a shame, this can't be the Seminary I attended."
– Ron Williamson via the *Arkansas Baptist News* (ABN) Facebook page.

"I never knew they were there. Glad they are removed. It is sad that we glorify men in this way."
– Daniel Shane Dismuke via the ABN Facebook page.

Clergy applaud Little Rock Congregations Study

Tim Yarbrough
Arkansas Baptist News

LITTLE ROCK – Results of a new Little Rock Congregations Study were revealed April 11 during a Little Rock Religious Leaders Summit attended by 60 area clergy members, political leaders and the media.

In sharing a summary of findings, researcher Rebecca A. Glazier, associate professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock School of Public Affairs, said she felt “a spiritual dimension to this work” while conducting the survey among 112 Little Rock clergy representing Islamic, Mormon, Mainline Protestant, Jewish, Catholic, Evangelical Protestant and Black Protestant religious traditions.

Speakers at the event included Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott Jr. and Arkansas

Lt. Gov. Tim Griffith, who is a member of Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock.

Glazier said goals of the congregations study were to: 1) learn more about the impacts of local faith-based community engagement, 2) get students out of the classroom and into the community, and 3) provide relevant and meaningful findings to the community.

The average weekly attendance of congregations responding to the survey was: 29 percent, fewer than 100; 22 percent, 100-199; 25 percent, 200-699, and 10 percent, more than 700. Fifteen congregations did not answer the question regarding average weekly attendance.

Forty-six percent of leaders

responding to the survey said their congregation is growing, while 39 percent indicated their congregation was about the same and 10 percent said their congregation was declining, Glazier said.



Scott

Doug Hibbard, pastor of East End Baptist Church, East End, and president of the Arkansas Baptist News Board of Directors, was one of several Southern Baptist clergy in attendance.

“It was valuable to learn the benefits of pastors encouraging involvement in the community, both for the community and the church,” said Hibbard. He said he found hearing from Glazier to be “a great help in seeing how we as Arkansas Baptists can be part of strengthening the wel-

fare of our city.”

Hibbard said it was also encouraging to hear Mayor Scott speak of the value of congregations of faith in the Little Rock community.

“Too often, we develop isolated pockets: the church, the government, the community; we need to work together for the benefit of all. Further, it is worth noting that none of the presentations or ideas excluded being Christ-centered in our service to the community and being evangelistic in our efforts. The UA-Little Rock and government voices encouraged congregations to minister as they are led and welcomed the diversity of involvement,” said Hibbard.

To read the congregations study in its entirety, visit research.ualr.edu/lrcs.

Contact Tim Yarbrough at tim@arkansasbaptist.org.

ABN Digest

Stories of interest
to Arkansas Baptists

MCUTS to merge into Union University in August

JACKSON, Tenn. – The Memphis Center for Urban and Theological Studies (MCUTS) will merge with Union University in August and become the Memphis College of Urban and Theological Studies, an academic unit of Union University.

MCUTS, which was founded in 2000 through a cooperative effort from several Memphis nonprofits and churches, “exists to provide affordable, accessible and accredited theological education and career-oriented degrees for those serving in an urban context to transform Memphis and the Mid-South for the kingdom of Christ,” according to its mission statement.

About 120 students are currently enrolled at MCUTS, with about 18 full-time faculty and staff. The merger will take effect Aug. 1, pending an acceptance by the board of Union’s accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, at its June meeting.

“What MCUTS has been doing and is doing is really strong and effective,” Union University President Samuel W. “Dub” Oliver said. “They’re coming under the Union umbrella, and we’re expanding our mission to provide Christ-centered education that promotes excellence and character development in service to church and society through this urban emphasis in Memphis.”

Union’s work has for years consisted of three main “streams,” Oliver said: traditional undergraduate, which is the central stream and what Union has been doing for nearly two centuries; graduate programs; and adult degree completion programs. MCUTS will add a fourth stream to the university.

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

April: Child abuse awareness and prevention

Editor’s Note: April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Garrick D. Conner
Special to the ABN

IN THE AFTERMATH of the *Houston Chronicle’s* explosive investigative report about sexual abuse in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), leaders at all levels are being urged to get serious about screening and training paid staff and volunteers, as well as providing opportunities for abuse-related education and conversations.

Over the past three decades, well-publicized scandals in the Catholic Church and Boy Scouts led many charitable and service organizations to tighten access by child predators. These actions resulted in Protestant churches becoming the last frontier for crimes against children.

Derek Brown, executive director of Arkansas Baptist Children’s Homes and Family Services, welcomes the SBC’s efforts to make needed changes.

“Protecting children from strangers is necessary but far from sufficient for preventing abuse,” he said. “Most of the time, offenders are much closer than we realize because

they are experts at gaining and exploiting trust.”

From her modest perch on Main Street in downtown Little Rock, Elizabeth Pulley oversees statewide efforts to coordinate services for children and families who have experienced abuse of any kind. Pulley serves as the executive director of Children’s Advocacy Centers of Arkansas (CAC), the administrative chapter that contains 17 regional offices, which operate under a variety of names.

With more than 30,000 calls to the statewide abuse reporting hotline last year, and more than 5,000 children seen at the various Arkansas centers, Pulley is keenly aware of the need for increased awareness and prevention measures.

The regional offices provide a unique collaborative setting in which interdisciplinary teams focus on helping children who have been identified as likely victims of abuse. These teams include mental health counselors, forensic investigators, nurses, law enforcement personnel, and child advocates.

While “stranger danger” has become something of a mantra in recent years, Pulley stresses that “90 percent of the time, abuse happens at the hands of

people the kids know.”

She adds that the “not normal” is normal for a lot of kids. “They often don’t know something is wrong until someone tells them.”

In the CAC offices throughout the state, children’s handprints bear evidence of the thousands who have been served in some way. But for Pulley, each set of handprints – some of them tiny – reminds her of the thousands of cases in which abuse goes unreported. She believes churches can play a significant role in changing the culture of abuse.

“One of the most important things a church can do is to talk about the reality of abuse,” she said. “By creating educational opportunities, church leaders can help their members recognize the signs of abuse and learn how to report it.”

The CAC currently has seven satellite centers in rural communities. These centers operate with limited hours and staff, but Pulley understands the need for such safe places in smaller communities. Her vision for the advocacy centers includes the addition of service dogs as well as mobile units for underserved areas.

Rex Horne, former Arkansas Baptist pastor and

president of Ouachita Baptist University, serves on the CAC Advisory Council. He shares Pulley’s sense of urgency and passion for the services they provide.

“I am burdened that we have senseless and sinful child abuse in every community in our state,” Horne said. “I thank God for the women and men in our centers. They defend, protect and advocate for the most vulnerable and voiceless children.”

Horne encourages churches to connect with their local CAC to learn of the many resources available for awareness, education and equipping.

Whether in the church or community at large, leaders can find common ground when it comes to this issue.

“We want to reach every single kid who has suffered abuse,” Pulley said. “We don’t want any child to not have access to services.”

If you know of or suspect abuse of a child, please call the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline at 844-SAVE-A-CHILD. All calls are confidential.

Garrick D. Conner is a licensed marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor and ordained minister. He serves as discipleship pastor at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock.

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)

Feeling old? It's for good reason

There is no doubt our country is experiencing massive social, political and religious shifts.

I don't know about you, but I am numbed by the nearly daily pronouncements of changes in mores that once seemed steady and unchangeable. Mores, as we know, is a plural noun defined as "fixed morally binding customs of a particular group."

Things that our society once had broad agreement on now seem up for debate.

There's a good chance if you are reading this column that you are a part of the Baby Boomer generation born between the years of 1948 and 1963 (ages 56 to 71), and you are either retired or on the verge of retirement.

For a number of years Baby Boomers have held the top spot in our country as the largest group of living Americans. But according to the U.S. Census Bureau, that will change sometime in 2019 when Millennials (born between the years of 1981 and 1996) are expected to outnumber Boomers 73 million to 72 million.

According to a report by Pew Research, the growth of the Millennial generation (ages 23 to 38) is being helped to population dominance by the influx of young immigrants to the U.S., leapfrogging the Generation X category – Americans born between 1965 to 1980 (ages 39 to 54).

Of course, as has been well documented, the impact on the Church is wide ranging.

Experts tell us that Baby Boomers and Millennials

have radically different expectations of faith and the Church.

As they enter retirement, Baby Boomers are said to be seeking significance, meaning and purpose, according to generational researcher Haydn Shaw.

"Almost a decade ago the greatest experts on Baby Boomers reported that Boomers were moving

into a spiritual phase of life. Boomers volunteer more than any

other generation; they go on cause vacations, and some of them are going back to church," said Shaw.

But there's a problem, according to Shaw. At a time when Boomers are returning to church, many churches have turned their attention to ministering to Millennials.

"Boomers have never been a quiet generation that fades into the background," Shaw states in the article, "3 Reasons Your Church May Not Be Ready for Baby Boomers."

Boomers want to retain influence, says Shaw, and they are doing retirement their own way. Some are retiring earlier; some are retiring later and some are not retiring at all. Boomers have much higher expectations of church – if they choose to participate at all.

Shaw, a former pastor, says Boomers have little patience for poor management, and that goes for the church they attend.

"Whereas the Traditionalists would volunteer even if things were not well-organized, many Boomers are used to working in corpora-

tions where things, while not perfect by any stretch, are often better managed than even in the large churches," he said.

Shaw concludes, "Boomers can be a major force for impacting the world, but churches of all sizes will need to up their management game or the Boomers will go someplace else to make a difference."

And if addressing the needs of Boomers isn't enough, churches must learn to attract and keep the attention of Millennials as well.

The bottom line is that churches need to do a better job of developing "Generational IQ," according to Shaw, in his book "Generational IQ: Christianity Isn't

Dying, Millennials Aren't the Problem, and the Future is Bright."

There are many thought-provoking takeaways from Shaw's book to consider, but I'll only list a few:

– For the first time in history, churches today must deal with addressing the needs of multiple generations all at the same time.

– For years parents and teachers have told Millennials they are special, and they believe it. In a survey, 96 percent of Millennials agreed or somewhat agreed with this statement, "I can do something great." That goes for church. If they bother to participate in church, they want it to have significance.

– A large number (34 per-

cent) of Millennials surveyed responded they didn't know what makes something right or wrong.

– And finally, Shaw writes, "I never worry that Christianity will disappear, but I am terrified that the Millennials who grew up in the church aren't significantly more orthodox in their theology than those who didn't."

The challenges for the Church are many, but our God is great and can do great things in our ministries if we allow Him. It may mean giving up some things and embracing other new things that seem less familiar and uncomfortable.

The fear of change can have

See **FEELING OLD** page 6

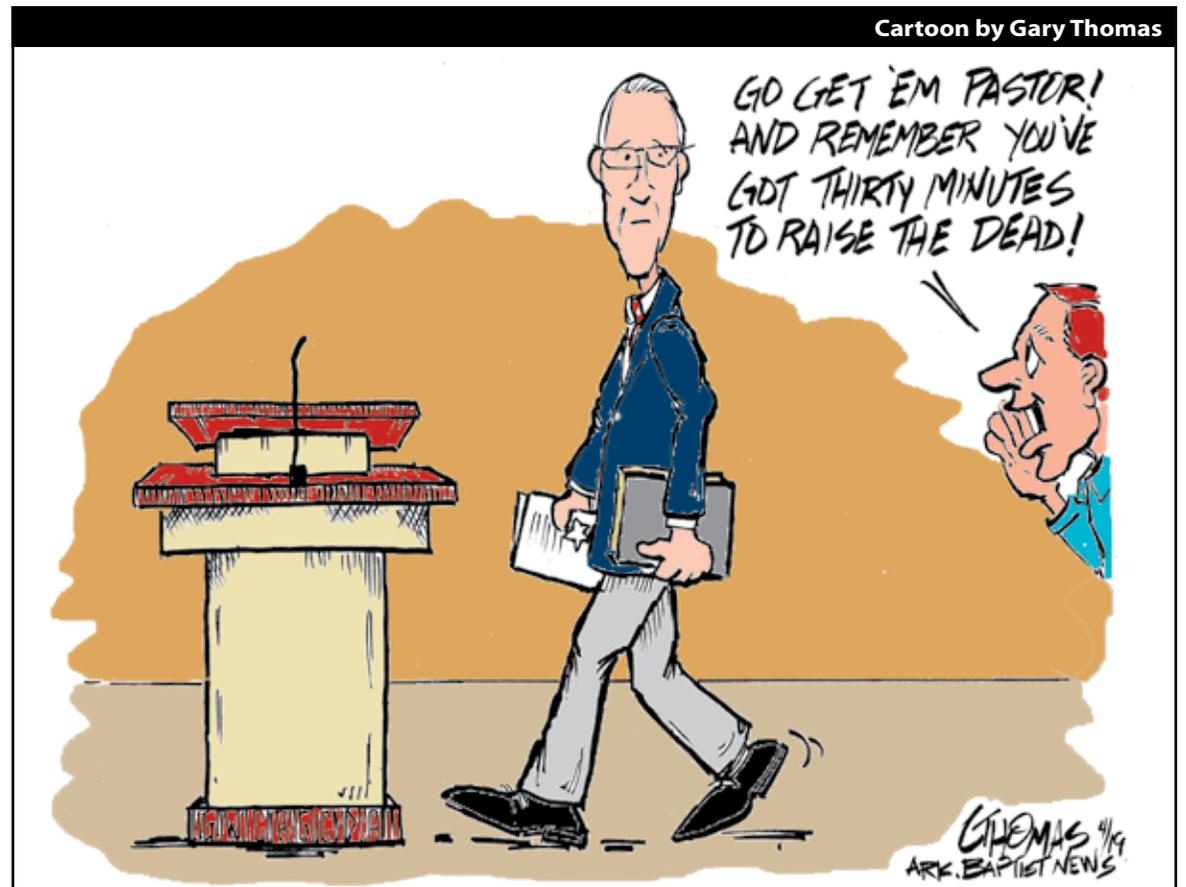


Pressing On

Tim Yarbrough

Phil. 3:14

Cartoon by Gary Thomas



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The historical Jesus: Part 3

We have been discussing the historical reliability of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. So far, two points of historical acceptance have been noted. First, Jesus Christ existed. This is accepted by an overwhelming majority of ancient Near Eastern scholars. And, second, it is also generally accepted that Jesus was crucified.

In this piece, I want to defend the historical reliability of the burial of Jesus in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

Episcopal Bishop and resurrection skeptic, John Shelby Spong, writes, "Jesus died alone. He died the death of a publicly executed criminal. His body probably received the



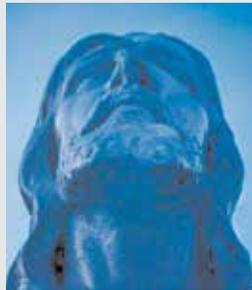
Deep Waters

Chad Meeks

typical treatment given to those so unfortunate as to fall into the category. He was removed from the instrument of execution, placed in a common grave,

and covered over. No records were kept, for no value was attached to those who had been executed. Bodies did not last that long in their graves anyway. Burial removed the stench of decaying flesh, and in a very short time only some unmarked bones remained. Even the bones were gone before too long. Nature rather efficiently reclaims its own resources" ("Resurrection," 240).

Gerd Ludemann, a German New Testament scholar and resurrection skeptic, claims that Jesus was buried, but not in an honorable way and not by Joseph of Arimathea. He notes that Joseph was probably a historical figure, but the act of laying Jesus in His tomb is a late addition to the gospel narrative.



But was Jesus merely buried in a common grave? What is the major consensus among those who study this topic?

Let's start with the evidence (much of which can be found in apologists' writings on the resurrection). First, the burial of Jesus is supported in ancient traditional Christian sayings. In 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, Paul, attesting to what he had received, wrote that Jesus "was buried." Paul wrote 1 Corinthians around 55 A.D.; therefore, the burial narrative was an early testimony of believers.

Second, if one were to invent a historical figure, it is less likely that the historical figure would be one of prominence. Mark wrote that Joseph of Arimathea was a "respected member of the council [i.e., the Sanhedrin]" (Mark 15:43). If Joseph was just a legend, indicating that he was a member of the Jewish council would make it easy for protagonists to discredit his claim. Yet, no such counter exists.

Third, there are no alternative burial narratives that exist in ancient history. Early Christianity certainly had its skeptics (e.g., Pliny the Younger). Yet, given the historical proximity of the ancient skeptics to the resurrection, no competing burial claims exist.

And last, most ancient Near Eastern scholars accept that Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph by Joseph. As William Lane Craig says, "The majority of New Testament critics concur that Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea in the tomb" ("Jesus' Resurrection," 33). In fact, it seems to be one of the most reliable attestations of early Christianity.

Given the four reasons mentioned here, I think it is completely reasonable to trust in the scriptural claim that Jesus Christ was crucified and buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin and early convert of Christianity.

Chad Meeks is associate pastor of youth and discipleship at Cedar Heights Baptist Church in North Little Rock.

New leadership in SBC entity partners

One of the exciting aspects of our work as Southern Baptists is our Cooperative Program partnerships that create spiritual synergy for maximum gospel impact; and we benefit when both Arkansas and our national entities are strong.

In the past year the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has faced the very unusual experience of having vacancies in the top leadership positions of five national entities. Both LifeWay and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary are still in the search process. However, three entities have called leaders who are great cause for excitement and optimism. The Executive Committee of the SBC, the International Mission Board, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary have filled their top leadership positions with some of the finest and proven servant leaders that exist within our ranks today.

The SBC Executive Committee has called Dr. Ron-



Executive Directions

Sonny Tucker

nie Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, to be their leader. Dr. Floyd is a dear friend to Arkansas Baptists. He is one of the most gifted and accomplished leaders in the SBC, evidenced by his leadership at Cross Church, the National Day of Prayer, and

as a recent past SBC president. Hallmarks of his ministry include an extreme passion for prayer, evangelism, missions, next generation leadership and racial diversity. I have total confidence that Dr. Floyd's problem-solving ability and intense Great Commission focus will be immediately evident.

Dr. Paul Chitwood has recently been called to lead the International Mission Board (IMB) of the SBC. Dr. Chitwood is an incredible leader as evidenced by his proven track record as a pastor, seminary professor, and past executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Arkansas Baptists got a firsthand view of Dr. Chitwood's

compelling vision, humility, decision-making ability and vast leadership depth when he spoke at our most recent State Evangelism Conference. I am confident that Dr. Chitwood's proven ability to lead a large organization will be immediately seen in the impact level of the IMB.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, has called Dr. Adam Greenway as its new president. Dr. Greenway has most recently served at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism, and Church Growth. He is an accomplished scholar and powerful preacher, and he possesses a tremendous grasp of the practical aspects of Great Commission ministry. Dr. Greenway's personal warmth and immediate actions as a visionary leader have caused great excitement and enthusiasm for the seminary's future.

I ask Arkansas Baptists to join me in praying for the two national entities still in the

See **PARTNERS** page 6

The 'roller coaster' of social media

I continue to struggle with the current tenor of social media, even among Christian circles. Too often, I see innocent posts about a church event, a Scripture passage, or even an appointment to a Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) committee turn into some kind of blood feud.

It made me think of something I experienced "back in the day." Maybe

a few of you are old enough to remember when Magic Springs first opened in 1978. At that time, their feature ride was called the Roaring Tornado.

For its time, it was quite a thrill. By today's standards, it might seem small and simple, but back then, especially when I was 8 years old, it was amazing.

The Roaring Tornado was a roller coaster that climbed one big hill, moved through one huge loop (yes, turning you upside down as it went

and then climbed to the top of a second big hill. At that point, it shifted in reverse and plunged back through the loop to return to where the ride began.

Loop to loop, you might say.

I can remember running to get in line when I first managed to attend the park, and the line was huge. I probably stood in it for 40 minutes.

I impatiently awaited my turn until I was near the front of the line. I knew then that I'd be on the next run - so I grinned as I watched it launch off one last time without me.

It roared into the big loop, while I tracked it every step of the way, thinking about my turn. The people riding it were roaring, too, and then, right at the apex, I heard something strange. As discreetly as I can describe it, let's just say that a rider projectile-vomited, and it hung in midair as the people behind it

were passed through it.

I could hear it splatter. I shivered just thinking about it, and I knew it could have been me.

When the ride pulled back into the loading station, the workers got out the water hose and started to wash the cars out, as if this happened a lot. I slipped out of line and went and rode the bumper cars.

I try to remember that experience when I get ready to post something negative and unnecessary on social media.

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me - practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8, ESV).

Greg Sykes is pastor of First Baptist Church, Russellville, and president of the ABSC.



President's Perspective

Greg Sykes

The gospel versus cultural Christianity

I first read about the Notre Dame Cathedral fire when checking up on the day's current events on a popular news aggregate website I frequent.

I was initially thankful because the first article I read mentioned that no people were hurt in the fire. However, the massive historic significance of a church that had its cornerstone laid in the year 1163 was not lost on me.

The cathedral has long been known the world over as the emblem of French Catholic Christianity and, in many ways, France itself.

After the fire, stories abounded with news that while much of the cathedral's structure was destroyed, two of its bell towers and much of its interior – including historically significant artifacts housed within its walls – were saved.

Britain's *Daily Mail* reported on the efforts of a "hero" fire brigade chaplain who risked his life entering the blazing cathedral to rescue ancient Church relics – which were said to include Christ's crown of thorns.

As a history lover, I am al-

ways sad to learn that historically significant architecture, art or other items are lost forever. Such objects act as windows to lost eras, allowing us to better understand and appreciate the past.

Yet, as a Christian, I found media reports of the Notre Dame fire disconcerting.

Who knows if the crown of thorns that was saved from destruction was actually the one worn by the Savior of the world two millennia ago? From a historic perspective, it would be intriguing if it were. However, from a spiritual perspective, the crown has zero value since, if the Bible's account of the resurrection is true, Christ is alive!

Unlike every other chief figure of any other faith or spiritual philosophy that has existed, the God of the Bible is alive and wants to be involved in the lives of His creation. Therefore, relics, idols and any other spiritual implements designed to provide a sense of physical connection to the one true God are unnecessary.

This truth is the very heart of the Easter season that Christians across the world recently celebrated – our God became

man, died for our sins, rose from the dead and is now an advocate for all who follow Him! What an amazing truth that is.

While the vast majority of French citizens, nearly 90 percent in some polls, still claim Roman Catholicism as their religion, a 2011 Ipsos (a global market research firm based in Paris) poll found only 19 percent of French individuals polled, "believe in God or a supreme being."

These statistics imply that while most French people still identify as Catholics, they no longer view the Church as a spiritual body, but a welcomed relic of their national identity and heritage.

The Notre Dame Cathedral fire not only confirmed this, but also pointed out that the French people are not alone in their view of Christianity.

Millions of people from across the vast reaches of the once definitively Christian Western world, offered their thoughts, prayers and sympathy for the damage to an international symbol. But what is the Notre Dame Cathedral a symbol of today?

For years, we have seen the steady degradation of Christianity in the West. Sure, the

West was never fully Christian – however one might define such a designation – but the West was definitively shaped by Judeo-Christian truth found in the Bible.

Without the revelation of God, concepts such as loving one's neighbor as well as one's enemy, being charitable to those who are less fortunate instead of taking advantage of their weakness for personal gain, the sinful nature of man and its eternal consequences and, most importantly, the fact that God sent His Son to earth to walk among us and die for the sins of all who believe in Him, would be inconceivable – folly at best. These are tenets

of Christianity, but they are also basic truths that all people today benefit from, even as their universal recognition in much of Western culture is quickly diminishing.

Reactions to the Notre Dame Cathedral fire highlight the heavy irony that while the West was won – so to speak – by the truth at the heart of Christianity, when belief in Christ and Him crucified is lost, symbols that once stood for something incomprehensibly beautiful, are now just thorns.

Caleb Yarbrough is associate editor of the *Arkansas Baptist News*. Email him at caleb@arkansasbaptist.org.



Call & Response

Caleb Yarbrough

FEELING OLD

continued from page 4

a devastating effect on our personal lives, as well as the ministry of the Church.

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" Isaiah 43:19 (ESV).

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



ARKANSAS BAPTIST COMMUNICATORS RECOGNIZED – Arkansas Baptist communicators from the Arkansas Baptist State Convention (ABSC), Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries (ABCHomes), Ouachita Baptist University (OBU) and Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) won awards in multiple categories related to public relations, writing and design during the 55th Annual Wilmer C. Fields Awards Competition during the Baptist Communicators Association's workshop April 10-13 in Riverside, Calif. Ouachita won the Diane Reasoner Award for Exceptional Achievement in Interactive Communications grand prize for the "It's [wash-i-tah]" social media post. Above, (from left), are: Andrew Sweatman, communications team member, ABSC; Marissa Pilcher, communications production coordinator at the ABSC; Rachel Moreno, editorial coordinator at OBU; Ashley Carozza, graphic design coordinator at OBU; Nick Burt, assistant communications director at the ABSC; Stella Prather, communications director at ABCHomes; and Trennis Henderson, national correspondent with WMU.

PARTNERS

continued from page 5

search process. Also, let's join in thanking God for the tremendous leaders that He has placed in these three entities and for the incredible work that He is about to do.

J.D. "Sonny" Tucker is executive director of the *Arkansas Baptist State Convention*.

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Ballard celebrated for 60 years of ministry, music career

WALNUT RIDGE – Light Baptist Church celebrated Mary Ann Ballard’s 60 years of ministry as the church’s piano player and her gospel music career Sunday, April 14.

“Mary Ann started attending Light Baptist Church at the age of 18,” said Tommy Stacy, pastor of Light Baptist Church. “She became the church’s assistant piano player and has been the

church’s pianist since.”

Ballard is the oldest of four children born to James Ivy, a Southern Baptist minister for 50 years, and Marie Ivy. She grew up in the Light community and graduated from Greene County Tech.

“We were a musical family,” said Ballard. “My heritage in music goes back to my dad. He was a minister and played piano. My siblings and I would

travel with him when we were young and sing.

“Then, I married into a musical family with Jim. I always tell people that I never would have married him if he couldn’t sing,” she said.

Ballard began writing songs in the early 1970s. Her first song, “It’ll be Joy,” was quickly recorded by several groups and secured Ballard a spot with Word Music Publishing in

Nashville, Tenn.

“I just started writing, and they just started coming,” said Ballard. “I would write seven or eight songs at a time and run to Nashville with them.”

Ballard has written more than 200 songs and has 76 songs recorded by 40 artists and groups including Florida Boys, The Perrys and Greater Vision. Her songs have been played

on radio stations all across the country and televised nationwide. Ballard’s song, “You Are Special,” is the theme at various National Autism Association meetings across America.

“I just pray that my songs have touched lives and maybe changed lives,” said Ballard. “In the gospel music industry, you write songs that uplift the Lord, and you just hope and

pray that they give meaning, save a life, save a marriage or give comfort. You don’t write them for yourself; you write them for others.”



Ballard

Ballard was nominated as Gospel Writer of the Year by Gospel Music Association, and she has won the Arkansas Sesquicentennial Song Writing Contest for her song, “Arkansas Land.”

“Mary Ann is a true witness for Jesus Christ,” said Stacy. “She is one of the most faithful and dedicated Christians that I have known. In everything she does, she does not want any recognition or glory.”

The tribute service included special performances of Ballard’s songs by Charlton and Holly Cupp, The Ivys and The Poes.

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PERFECT

continued from page one

Running had been my escape from stress and life when I needed a break. It was something I loved so much, and it had been part of my identity. It was gone," said Laranda Burrow.

Second setback

In February 2018, Laranda Burrow was diagnosed with pulmonary embolism, which is a blood clot in the lungs. Her pulmonologist told her that she could begin running again once she started taking blood thinners.

She also began seeing a physical therapist that specialized in the Schroth Method, a nonsurgical treatment for people with scoliosis. The therapist taught Laranda Burrow exercises to help strengthen her core and hips, which are essentials to running.

In the following months, Laranda Burrow was gradually able to get back to running like she did before her scoliosis diagnosis.

Third setback

"The third health setback came later that spring when I was diagnosed with stage IV endometriosis," said Laranda Burrow. "I'd apparently had it

for years and never knew it."

Endometriosis is a condition where uterine lining is present on other organs inside the body. The damage in her body was so extensive it couldn't be repaired laparoscopically. In August, Laranda Burrow underwent major abdominal surgery and was cut open from hip to hip.

"I was instructed to not exercise - especially run - for at least six weeks," she said. "Being the rebel I was, I went for a slow walk around my neighborhood five days after."

"I ended up giving my doctor's nurse such a hard time about wanting to exercise again that she ended up giving me clearance to walk on a treadmill when two weeks had passed after surgery. And so, exactly one week after surgery, I did just that," Laranda Burrow said.

By December, Laranda Burrow was running better than she ever had before.

"I never thought I'd see the day where I could manage to run seven consecutive miles without passing out, but I was doing it," she said.

The Burrow family was planning a trip to Ireland for March 2019, and Laranda began to wonder if there was a race the week she would be there.

"As it turned out, there was

a half-marathon and 10K the day before St. Patrick's Day in Tralee, a town I knew we'd be near at the time," said Laranda Burrow. "While my fears told me to go with the 10K, my heart said I needed to do something challenging."

Fourth setback

In January, Laranda Burrow signed up for the Tralee Harriers half-marathon. Three days later, she sprained her ankle.

"It was sad to watch," said Donnie Burrow. "Those challenges just kept coming one right after the other. Your heart couldn't help but break for her. She had this big dream she wanted to accomplish, but then came the blood clots, surgery and a sprained ankle just weeks before."

Laranda Burrow lost a month and a half of training time, but continued doing weights. She was finally able to run again with just two weeks left before the race.

Race day

"When the day of the race came, I knew I wasn't prepared by normal standards," Laranda Burrow said. "I also knew that the fact I had made it all the way to where I was from where I started was anything but normal. It was supernatural, and I would depend on that same supernatural strength to get



TIGER SERVE DAY – Ouachita Baptist University students, faculty and staff participated in various service projects across Arkadelphia April 6. The next Tiger Serve Day is scheduled for Sept. 21.

me through the race."

The day of the race had awful conditions. The temperature stayed in the 40s, and there were wind gusts up to 50 mph. It rained the entire time, and it was at an altitude Laranda Burrow wasn't used to.

"It was definitely a challenge, but the verse printed on my right sleeve reminded me that God's 'power is made perfect in weakness,'" Laranda Burrow said, quoting 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV).

Contact Sarah Davis at sarah@arkansasbaptist.org.

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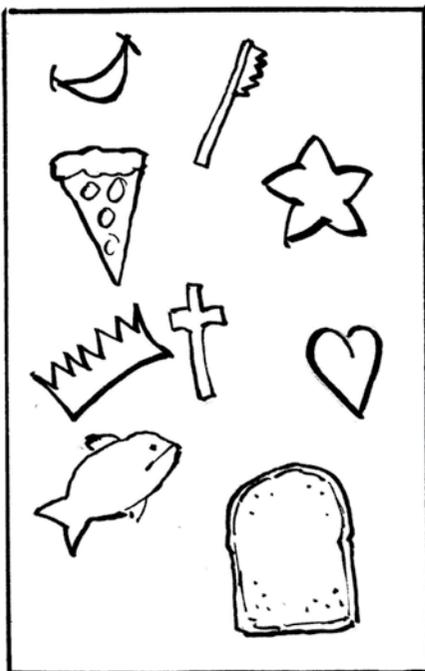
2 Timothy 2:5 (CSB)

SAMUEL AND ELI

Eli discovered that it was really God who was calling Samuel in the temple.

Search and discover the hidden objects in the picture.

Color the picture.



GAOHAAS ARK. BAPTIST NEWS

Across

1. Fowl that is unclean (Deuteronomy 14)
4. Baby food
7. "faith, ____, and charity" (1 Corinthians 13:13)
11. College grad
13. Patriotic inits.
14. Zest
15. "casting all your ____ upon him" (1 Peter 5:7)
16. Kin (abbr.)
17. Dodecanese island
18. "Fear God. Honour the ____" (1 Peter 2:17)
19. "The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be ____ unto thee" (Numbers 6:25)
21. Wrath
23. West. state
24. "let thy servant ____ instead of the lad" (Genesis 44:33)
27. Abraham's second wife (Genesis 25)
32. Kept from falling

33. ____-avis

34. Blue
35. "we were ____ of God to be put in the trust with the gospel" (1 Thessalonians 2:4)
37. "and ____ the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel" (2 Samuel 24:1)
38. Aunt's mate in Matanzas
40. "they will not endure sound ____" (2 Timothy 4:3)
45. Dew ____
49. "next to them builded Zaccur, the son of ____" (Nehemiah 3:2)
50. Weep
51. Feminine name
52. "The earth shall ____ to and fro" (Isaiah 24:20)
53. ____ limb
54. Tale
55. "be like a ____ planted by the rivers of waters" (Psalm 1:3)
56. He follows Ezra (abbr.)
57. King ____, Clavell work

Down

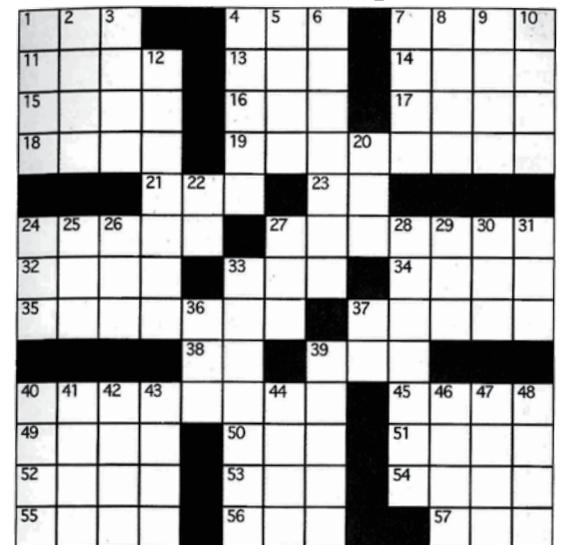
1. ____ court
2. Turkish regiment
3. "And Naomi said, ____ again my daughters" (Ruth 1:11)
4. "____ me with hyssop" (Psalm 51:7)
5. Tribe of Israel (var., Luke 2)
6. "Peace...within thy walls, and prosperity within thy ____" (Psalm 122:7)
7. Radiant (comb. form)
8. Tastes like butter
9. Butterfly fish
10. Son of Seth (Genesis 5)
12. Where Ahaziah and Josiah were slain (2 Kings 9, 23)
20. Tractor
22. Black (prefix)
24. Exclamation of surprise
25. ____ canto
26. "Love worketh no ____" (Romans 13:10)
27. Leather
28. "the floods of ____men made

me afraid" (2 Samuel 22:5)

29. Stream
30. Feminine nickname
31. "as a ____ gathereth her chicks under her wings" (Matthew 23:37)
33. Prepared by Esau (Genesis 25)
36. "and there was ____ in heaven" (Revelation 12:7)
37. Achan's sin caused defeat at this city (Joshua 7)
39. Son of Nahor and Reumah (Genesis 22)
40. Bane of Mr. Clean
41. "according to his eating, an ____ for every man" (Exodus 16:16)
42. Canadian Indian tribe
43. Playing piece
44. "____ other name under heaven" (Acts 4:12)
46. "the young lions ____ after their prey" (Psalm 104:21)
47. Extra (Scot.)
48. "that ____ after the dust of the earth" (Amos 2:7)

Crossword by Barbour Publishing, Inc.

ABN Crossword puzzle



Crossword answers, page 10

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Editor's Note: The Arkansas Baptist News would love to share your church news with the state. Send your information to sarah@arkansasbaptist.org or call 1-800-838-2272, ext. 5153. Please submit information three weeks prior to the event.

Baptist life

First Baptist Church, Searcy, will host a regional prayer conference at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 27. Greg Addison, associate executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and Don Pucik, associational mission strategist for Northshore Baptist Association in Louisiana, will speak.

North Pulaski Baptist Association (NPBA) will host its annual golf tournament at The Greens at North Hills in Sherwood, Monday, May 13. For more information, contact NPBA at 501-812-6999.

Church life

Clay Dyer, professional bass fisherman, will share his testimony at 6 p.m., Saturday, May 11, at Bethel Baptist Church in Jacksonville.

On the move

Derek Allen is serving as pastor at Baring Cross Baptist Church, Sherwood.

Chuck Buchan is serving as pastor at Maddox Road Baptist Church, Jacksonville.

J.D. Cariker is serving as student pastor at Woodland Heights Baptist Church, Conway.

William Jaques is serving as pastor at First Baptist Church, Maumelle. He previously served as a consultant with the Arkansas Baptist State Convention for 10 years.

Tyler Lee is serving as associate worship pastor at First Baptist Church, Hot Springs.

Brad Morgan is serving as associate pastor of students and missions at First Baptist Church, Sherwood.

Oliver Thomas is serving as pastor at Webb City Baptist Church in Ozark.

Ordinations

Jonathan Drendel was ordained Sunday, April 7, at First Southern Baptist Church, Black Rock.

Milestones

First Baptist Church, Ashdown, will celebrate its 125th anniversary at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 28. Lunch will follow.

Zion's Light Baptist Church, Duff, will celebrate its 30th anniversary May 12.

Lonoke Baptist Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary Sunday, June 2. The

service will begin at 10 a.m., and a lunch will follow.

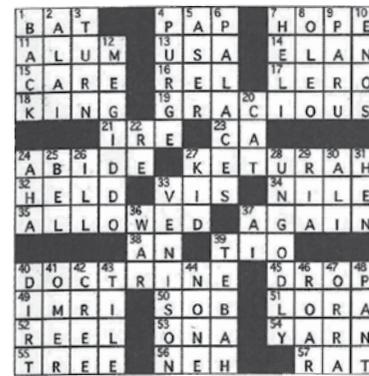
Obituaries

Allan Mesko, 66, of Hot Springs, died April 12.

Mesko served as the keyboard player for the Bill Gaither Trio, and as a worship leader at churches in Austin, Little Rock and Hot Springs.

Mesko was preceded in

See crossword, page 9



death by his mother, father, stepfather and brothers.

He is survived by his wife, three children, 11 siblings and stepmother.

The funeral was held April 20 at Lake Valley Community Church.

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The Baptist Ranch, Harrison, is seeking a houseparent couple.

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FBC, Maryville, MO, seeking **full-time pastor**. Agreement with Baptist Faith and Message 2000 required. Send resume to fbcmaryville@gmail.com. Deadline is 05/31/19.

Wyandotte Baptist Church seeking **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resumes to 102 Hawk Road, Wyandotte, Oklahoma, 74370 c/o Anne Marie Roper, Chairperson, Pastor Pulpit Committee.

FBC, Ash Flat, seeking **bi-vocational pastor** for a small congregation. Contact Carl Fuller, 870-994-2139 or mail resume to FBC, PO Box 335, Ash Flat, AR 72513.

Bi-vocational pastor needed - Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, Trumann, AR. Send resume to philhe45@yahoo.com or mail Phil Hendrix, PO Box 682, Trumann, AR 72472.

Stanfill Baptist Church in Northern Pulaski County, AR, is prayerfully seeking a **pastor**. Visit <https://sites.google.com/view/stanfillbaptistchurch> or email stanfillpastorsearchteam@gmail.com for more information.

Salttillo Heights Baptist Church in Conway,

AR, seeking **full-time or bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resumes to westk28@gmail.com.

Witt's Chapel Baptist Church in Maynard, AR, is seeking a **pastor**. Send resumes and references to: David Byers, 1340 Legate Road, Maynard, AR 72444.

Bigelow Baptist Church, Bigelow, AR, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Please send resumes to brandonrakridge@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Hector, is seeking a **bi-vocational pastor**. Send resume to 801 East 16th Street, Russellville, AR 72801, or email: arvba@suddenlink.net.

East Side Baptist Church, Paragould, AR, is seeking a **full-time senior pastor**. Please mail resumes to: Pastor Search Committee, East Side Baptist Church, 529 E. Court Street, Paragould, AR 72450, or email resumes to: brichey@connect2eastside.com. You may also include a sermon DVD or a link to a sermon video/audio.

Victory Baptist Church, Back Gate, AR, is seeking a **full-time pastor**. Please send resumes to: pastorsearch@vbcbackgate.com.

Mountain Top Cowboy Church, Heber Springs, is searching for a **full-time**

senior pastor. Mail resume to the Pastor Search Committee, 45 Heber Springs Rd., Heber Springs, AR 72543, or go online to www.mountaintopcowboychurch.com and click on "Pastor Search" for more information.

OTHER STAFF POSITIONS

First Baptist Church, Lowell, is seeking a **full-time youth pastor**. Send resumes to rob@fbclowell.com or mail to P.O. Box 246 Lowell, AR 72745.

First Baptist Church, Hardy, seeking **part-time worship leader** for congregational singing and adult choir. Send resume, inquiry to P.O. 27, Hardy, AR 72542, 870-856-3767.

Cane Creek Stoddard Baptist Association is seeking an individual to serve as the **BSU Director** at Three Rivers College in Poplar Bluff, MO. Details can be found at www.ccsba.com. Please email your cover letter and resume to ccsbaoffice@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church, Pottsville, is seeking a **bi-vocational youth minister**. Send resume to pastorjimhuffman@gmail.com or by

mail to PO Box 153 Pottsville, AR 72858.

FBC McAlester, OK, is seeking a **FT worship/media pastor**. Please see our website for more information and to submit resume.

First Baptist Church, Lepanto, Arkansas, is seeking a **F/T youth pastor**. Parsonage provided. You may e-mail resume to kyle@fbclepanto.com or mail to First Baptist Church, PO Box 400, Lepanto AR 72354.

Cocklebur Baptist, Ward, AR, is prayerfully seeking **part-time worship leader**. Accepting resumes until June 1. Email resumes to cbc4138@gmail.com or mail to Attn: Worship Leader Search Comm., 4138 Cocklebur Rd, Ward, AR 72176.

Mt. Gilead Baptist Church in Bethel Springs, TN, is seeking a **full-time student & music pastor**. We are a growing church with a heart for people all over the world. Please email your resume and/or DVD's to mlarue2020@gmail.com or mail to Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, 6185 Rowsey School Road, Bethel Springs, TN 38315, ATTN: Search Committee. For questions call 731-607-1000.

North Central Baptist Association is seeking a **full-time associational missionary**.

Send resumes to ncbaclinton@gmail.com or mail to: NCBA, 268 Main St., Clinton, AR 72031.

Glendale Baptist Church, Booneville, is seeking a **full-time minister to students**. For more information visit our website at www.glendalebc.org.

Maple Avenue Baptist Church of Smackover, AR, is seeking a **P/T student minister**. If interested, please call 870-310-5508 or email benmc@mapleavenuebc.com.

South Main Baptist Church, Crossett, is seeking a **bi-vocational youth pastor**. Send resume to: smbsecretary@windstream.net or PO Box 430, Crossett, AR 71635.

Perryville FBC is seeking a **bi-vocational music director**. Send resumes to pvtb.church@gmail.com.

MISCELLANEOUS

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APRIL 28, 2019

The last sermon Martin Luther King, Jr. preached was from Mark 10:35-45. He wanted it said in his eulogy, "Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others." This great man did give his life in service to others. King connected greatness with service.

On their way to Jerusalem Jesus was focused on His crucifixion (Mark 10:32-34). James and John were focused on greatness. James and John asked Jesus if He would let them sit on His right and left in His glory (10:37). Back in Capernaum, the disciples had argued about who was the greatest (9:33-34). They wanted positions of greatness. Jesus had already told them they would sit on thrones in "the Messianic Age" (Matt. 19:28). They wanted the greatest thrones.

Jesus explained the road to greatness and glory is through suffering. He used the imagery of a cup and baptism. The cup Jesus would drink was suffering. The baptism He would be baptized with indicated His future death, burial and resurrection. When asked if they could

drink this cup and be baptized with this baptism, they answered, "We are able" (10:39). They believed the suffering outweighed the significant reward of greatness in glory. The other disciples became angry, and Jesus used this as a teachable moment.

Jesus taught, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (10:43). Jesus took it a step further, "Whoever

wants to be first among you must be a slave to all" (10:44). Jesus reversed all worldly philosophy of greatness and service. Christ-

followers must esteem others more than self (Phil. 2:3-5).

Jesus came to serve and give His life as our ransom (10:45). He is the Servant-King. This is the ultimate reason He came. As His servants, we should serve others, always pointing others to Jesus. Pastor and author C. J. Mahaney said, "Ultimately our Christian service exists only to draw attention to our crucified and risen Lord Who gave Himself as the ransom for us all."

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Serves

MARK 10:35-45 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Sell everything you own

MATTHEW 19:16-26 (HCSB)

"Go, sell your belongings and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me" (19:21). Jesus was not saying that eternal life can be earned by selling all our possessions. We must look deeper.

We must look deeper into the condition of the rich man's heart. He was not coming to Jesus like one of the little children, in humility. He came to Jesus with a proud heart, holding fast to his possessions. He walked away "grieving because he had many possessions" (19:22). If he had been humble and truly trusted Jesus, he would have gladly sold his possessions and followed Jesus.

Jesus taught His disciples that it was hard to enter the kingdom of heaven when you're rich (19:23). It would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle (19:24), which is an impossibility. If we trust in riches and in our own efforts, it is impossible to enter God's kingdom. We must, in humility, trust in Christ.

MAY 5, 2019

What Jesus saw as He entered the temple filled Him with righteous anger and indignation. He wreaked havoc on those who sold doves for sacrifices and exchanged money. Jesus "began to throw out" those who were buying and selling in the temple; He overturned tables and chairs (Mark 11:15). The Greek word suggests "to drive out with force." Mark described Jesus blocking the way, not permitting anyone to bring goods back into the temple.

Surely Jesus understood the need for perfect doves for sacrifices, and Jewish currency was needed

for the various offerings. Pilgrims were required to bring acceptable sacrifices, which meant they had to be perfect. Most were forced to purchase certified animals from the temple priests. The backing for this practice was the powerfully corrupt Sanhedrin. They charged 16 times the going rate for certified animals. The moneychangers charged outrageous fees to exchange foreign currency for Jewish currency. Jesus saw the Court of the Gentiles turned into a religious bazaar fueled by extortion, bribery, greed and dishonesty. So, He cleansed or purged the temple.

ty. So, He cleansed or purged the temple.

Jesus came to the heart of the issue in verse 17. He began to teach them, "Is it not written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?' But you have made it a den of thieves!" (Mark 11:17). The temple was to be a place of prayer and worship for all nations. The chief priests, and Israel as a whole, missed this. The Court of the Gentiles, which had been turned into a religious bazaar, was the area in which Israel could attract and bless all the nations.

What would Jesus see if He came to your church and my church? How would He respond? Are our churches houses of prayer for all nations? Pastor and author Andrew Murray said, "Christ actually meant prayer to be the great power by which His church should do its work, and the neglect of prayer is the great reason the church has not greater power over the masses in Christian and heathen countries." May the Lord come and find us praying and worshipping as a community of faith made up of all nations.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Purifies

MARK 11:15-19; 12:41-44 (HCSB)

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Love your enemies

LUKE 6:27-36 (HCSB)

Our culture has become very polarized. There is an "us-versus-them" mentality. Those who stand in opposition to our ideologies, philosophies, theologies and political views are seen as adversaries. Yet, Jesus said, "Love your enemies" (Luke 6:27). True righteousness is revealed by true unconditional love.

Jesus didn't just tell us to love our enemies; He told us how (6:27-36). Repay hate with love, cursing with blessing, persecution and exclusion with intercessory prayer. We must turn the other cheek. If someone takes our coat, we must give them our shirt. Give when asked. When someone takes from us, we don't ask for it back. As we want others to do for us, we must do the same for them. We should not be like sinners who only love and do good to those who love and do good to them. Lend without interest. Jesus said if we do these things, "Your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High" (6:35).

What Jesus was asking us to do is totally countercultural and revolutionary. It is best not to look at these things as rules, but rather as an attitude of heart that expresses itself in positive ways when everyone around us is negative. We can be generous when those around us are being selfish. The Lord was not asking us to be legalistic, but to use wisdom to know when to do these things. Even Christian love must exercise discernment (Phil. 1:9-11). Two important principles emerge from this text: We must treat others as we would want

to be treated, and we must imitate our Father in heaven and be merciful (6:36).

Christ-followers must demonstrate a higher moral standard than those in the culture. We must love our enemies. When we do, we demonstrate the very love of God. The stream of love can always be traced to its source, God. Corrie Ten Boom said, "When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself."

Featured commentary writer



Gerald Nash

Gerald Nash is a registered respiratory therapist and EEG technician at St. Mary's Regional Health System in Russellville. He is involved in medical research, determining antibiotic resistance in tuberculosis. Nash leads a small group and is involved in many ministries at Second Baptist Church, Conway. He has attended several universities and seminaries, including Williams Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His degrees include a bachelor of arts in Christian ministries, master of arts and doctor of ministry in pastoral studies, and master of arts in theological studies. He is currently studying archaeology and paleography and volunteers on the Cairo Geniza Project, deciphering and analyzing ancient Greek and Arabic documents. Nash enjoys reading, bass fishing and spending time with his family. He and his wife, Mary Ann, love to travel, explore ancient ruins and go on wild animal safaris.



Inside:

- Ruling affirmed in Missouri Baptist cases
- Methodists vote to affirm biblical marriage
- SBC EC identifies presidential candidate
- Mammoth Spring BC celebrates 125 years
- Church Building & Facilities section

Wilkins named AM of the Year

North Pulaski Baptist Association leader honored

page 2



Leadership and apologetics

Students and leaders make Lead/Defend annual priority

Lisa Falknor
Special to the ABN

LITTLE ROCK - "Extremely busy" is how college student Rebekah Gullledge describes her life.

"It's been two weeks since I've had a free day," said Gullledge, a sophomore at the

"Lead/Defend is a priority for me," she said, adding, "It's an opportunity to reach out to students - not just college students and not just people from Little Rock - but all over the state. I get to talk about how to connect to the BCM and to church."

Tru Hill, a senior at the

Sharing Christ among the 'untouchables' in Southeast Asia

Sarah Davis
Arkansas Baptist News

WE HAVE an incredible story," said Earl Goatcher. "But it's His story."

It's a story Earl took time to write in his autobiography, "God's Direction, Our

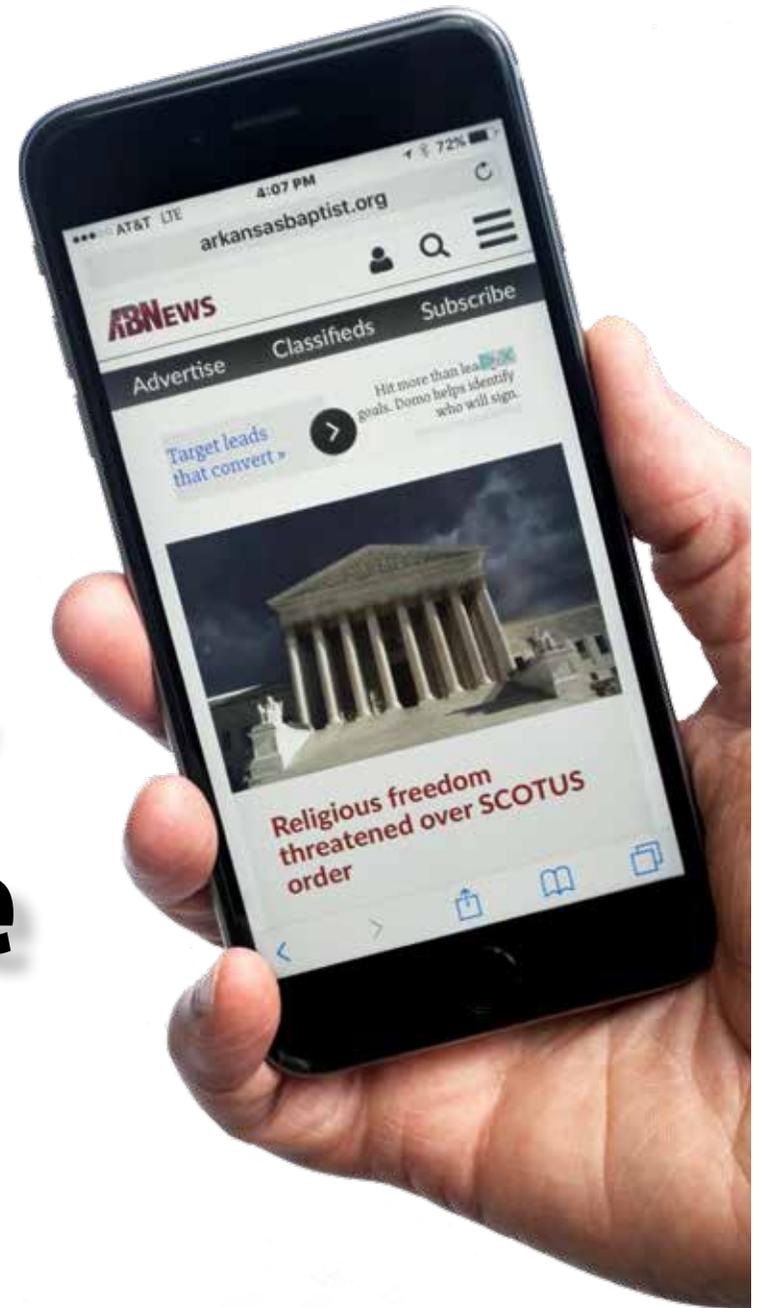


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