

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life God has promised to those who love him."

— James 1:12 (NIV)

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Newsjournal for Louisiana Baptists



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July 2, 2015

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION ANNUAL MEETING



Matt Miller/Baptist Press photo

Ronnie Floyd, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, leads small groups of messengers at the SBC annual meeting June 16 to "repent of all racism and all prejudice." Floyd called on all Southern Baptists to pray for the next Great Awakening during the evening session at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio.

SBC seeks awakening, supports marriage

BY DAVID ROACH
Baptist Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (BP) — Spiritual awakening, the defense of marriage and the preservation of religious liberty were among key themes addressed by messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 16-17 in Columbus, Ohio.

The meeting was highlighted by a Tuesday night prayer gathering led by SBC President Ronnie Floyd, at which an estimated 7,000 Southern Baptists spent two hours asking God for a third Great Awakening in America and the global advance of the Gospel. The gathering was watched by an additional 8,000 people online and broadcast on Daystar television.

The 5,407 registered messengers — up from 5,294 in Baltimore last year — also took several actions to advance racial and ethnic diversity within the SBC and celebrated nearly 60 missionaries during the first-ever joint missions service of the International and North American Mission Boards.

See **AWAKENING** on 9

ERLC to open Mideast office

BY ART TOALSTON & ERIN ROACH
Baptist Press

COLUMBUS (BP) — An international religious freedom office in the Mideast will be opened by the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Russell Moore announced at the SBC annual meeting June 17.

Moore, the ERLC's president, told messengers, "We must contend for religious freedom for our brothers and sisters in Christ and for everyone else wherever they are on the globe." He added, "We will not stand idly by while those with whom we will share eternity

are being led to the slaughter."

The ERLC announced the appointment of Travis Wussow of Austin, Texas, as ERLC director of international justice and religious liberty in a news release, also on June 17.

Through its Mideast office, the ERLC will develop "a holistic strategy to advocate for religious liberty and social justice around the globe," the news release stated, listing four primary initiatives:

- "Provide training resources for churches and organizations on issues related to justice and religious liberty.

- "Create original content to raise aware-

See **ERLC** on 13

After 5 years, is there a Great Commission Resurgence?

BY WILL HALL
Message Editor

When the gavel dropped to end the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting in Columbus, Ohio, it also marked the fifth anniversary of "a vision for a Great Commission Resurgence" that was adopted by messengers during the 2010 business sessions in Orlando, Fla.

In a nutshell, a blue ribbon task force — named by then SBC President Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga., and led by Ronnie Floyd, pastor of Cross Church, Northwest Ark., who now serves as president of the Convention — developed seven components of a plan "to mobilize Southern Baptists as a Great Commission people" with the goal of "penetrating the lostness" in North America and around the world.

Theirs was a daunting task, given the extent of the growing lostness in our country and abroad, and the apparent waning effectiveness of Southern Baptists in sharing the Gospel.

But, after so much effort was expended to convince somewhat skeptical Southern Baptists (reports varied on whether the "show-of-hands" vote was 60-40, 80-20 or 3-1 in favor) that these actions were "of vital importance to the future of our denomination" and "key to making immediate progress toward a Great Commission Resurgence," it is reasonable for Southern Baptists to expect to see some timely positive results.

In the business world, the research literature suggests it takes 2-4 years to see the results of a strategic initiative in the performance of a company.

To be fair, the Southern Baptist Convention does not operate like the typical corporation with regard to the relationship it maintains with the

See **GCR** on 7

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Louisiana entities, groups not expected to be impacted by Obama order

By PHILIP TIMOTHY &
BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writers

ALEXANDRIA – By relying on God's providence through the Cooperative Program, Louisiana Baptist entities and charitable organizations are not expected to feel the impact of an Obama Administration executive

order like other faith-based groups in the United States.

President Barack Obama's signing of executive order 13671 on July 21, 2014 would force faith-based organizations and charities receiving federal funding or grants to hire LGBT applicants or lose their funding.

"God has given the church, not the government, the task of caring for people in need," said Perry Hancock, president and CEO of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home. "Therefore, God's people should be the source for funding His work."

Hancock emphasized the Children's Home does not accept any type of federal funding, instead relying on gifts from the Cooperative Program and private donors

for its funding.

"We should be cautious of entering into agreements which limit our sharing of the gospel," said Hancock. "I come from an evangelical/Southern Baptist faith tradition which emphasizes sharing a verbal witness. We do not want to be in a position where we limit our ability to share the good news of Christ."

The order prohibits discrimination in the civilian federal workforce on the basis of gender identity and in the hiring by federal contractors on the basis of both sexual orientation and gender identity.

Faith-based groups are not exempt from Obama's executive order but the news has less impact on such groups because there are far fewer faith-based contract recipients than grant recipients according to Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam).

The White House has directed federal agencies to include "sexual orientation and gender identity" as protected classes in all grant agreements.

According to Jeff Cook, the Louisiana Baptist Convention's Compassion Ministry Strategist, "Some feeding ministries have received commodity food items from government sources," he said.

"The rule is ... you cannot give out government food that is tied to a required ministry presentation or event."

"Churches attempt to work around it by offering ministry or inviting ministry and most accept bible study or prayer, etc.," said Cook, "however, more and more ministries are moving away from government support because it has become increasingly difficult to work within the government's restrictions."

This isn't good news for the world's poor and needy said Austin Ruse, president of C-Fam.

"Many religious groups will have no choice but to forego government funding and perhaps close their doors permanently," Ruse told the *Christian Examiner* in a June 3 article. "Such a policy change will hit hardest in the most desperate part of the world – Africa – where they don't have the luxury to indulge in these new Western ideas of sexuality. They're too busy just trying to stay alive."

The order is expected to produce a dramatic impact closer to home.

"Faith-based organizations are providing assistance in communities across America, such as adoption, youth centers, child care

and development programs, youth counseling, shelters, and much, much more," Mat Staver, founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel, told the Examiner.

"... Christian organizations cannot offer biblical counseling and, at the same, hire people who do not follow the Bible and their doctrinal positions on human sexuality," Stave continued. "Ultimately, this LGBT regulation is going to cause irreparable harm to the children and the needy."

"This is just another example of the Obama Administration's hostility toward people of faith and biblical values," Staver said. "Obama is now using funding to force his immoral agenda on religious organizations."

Faith-based groups could fight back in the courts by claiming their rights are being violated under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act – a 1993 federal law – but such a move could end up being both costly and time-consuming said C-Fam.

"Success would be far from certain," the organization said.

Some federal agencies "are hesitant to make the change," but due to pressure from the White House "are reluctant to say no," C-Fam continued.

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State DR teams fan out to assist flooded areas in NW Louisiana

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

SHREVEPORT – With the raging Red River not far behind where he was standing, property owner Ricky Woodard surveyed the work a Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief team in his Shreveport neighborhood was doing with amazement.

Woodard, whose property is less than 100 yards from the Red River, estimates work done by the mud-out team from Zoar Baptist Church saved him nearly a month's worth of clean-up.

"They're like a bunch of ants coming together and getting things done almost instantly," Woodard said, with his two grandchildren standing nearby. "I'm so appreciative."

The team worked all day, removing mud and debris inside homes in the neighborhood heavily damaged by the river's recent floodwaters.

Loren Warren, a member of the team from Zoar Baptist Church, said that despite the temperatures that reached the upper 90s, the humidity was a small inconvenience compared to the blessings the team received.

"It feels wonderful to be the hands and feet of Christ and help those in need," Warren said. "I pray that when we are working that the people see Jesus."

Through June 24, teams completed 13 jobs and gave 32 gospel presentations, which resulted in four people

accepting Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, according to Larry Cupper, a regional coordinator with Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief.

"We give God all the glory," Cupper said.

Teams began arriving on June 16 to begin work on homes throughout the Shreveport/Bossier area. The teams on-site included the incident command, chaplains, assessors, feeding, laundry, childcare, medical professionals and the in the trenches mud-out recovery teams.

A childcare team arrived on June 20 to give comfort and games to kids of those families seeking help from volunteer agencies of VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) as well as a variety of government agencies. This was the first time for the team to deploy for a disaster, said Stanley Statham, director of missions for the Baptist Associations of Southeast Louisiana, which comprised most of the members of the team.

"The goal there is these families come to get assistance from child care agencies and the parents can focus on what they need to get done," Statham said. "To talk with some of the families and love on them in this time of their life where they suffered a significant loss, it's a blessing for everyone involved."

Units on site have included but were not limited to teams from Bellaire Baptist in Bossier City, First Baptist Church



Joe Dupree photo

Workers band together to clean the mud out of a house that was affected by the Red River flooding in Northwest Louisiana, especially in the Shreveport/Bossier City area.

in Blanchard, Zoar Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Rolling Hills Ministry in Ruston, Eastern Louisiana Baptist Association, Baptist Associations of Southeast Louisiana and Northshore Baptist Association. Operations began at Eastwood Baptist Church in Haughton and by June 22 had moved to Summer Grove

See **DISASTER RELIEF** on 16

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write the greatest of all news stories. It is short, completely true and affects every person who has ever lived. The story will never go away, never become past tense, never be outdated. Here is the story.

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Have you asked Him, and Him alone, to forgive your sin and make you right with God?

Have you surrendered your life to His grace and control? If you cannot answer "Yes" to those questions, please open your heart to Jesus right now.

You may be a church member, even serve in some capacity in the church. You may be a fine person (I'm sure you are).

But those things do not answer the question:

Have you received Jesus as Savior and Lord of your life?

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Romans 10:9-10

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~ The late Dr. Roy Fish, Former Director of Evangelism
at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminar

Gay marriage is just 'too dangerous'

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Warning this editorial contains excerpts of statements by the FDA which pointedly describe homosexual behavior.*

Despite Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy's statement in 2013 that there is "no legitimate purpose" for denying gay marriage, his legal opinion in *United States v. Windsor* (which set off a spate of federal judicial activism that overturned 26 voter-approved state protections for traditional marriage) ignored the preponderance of research showing that same-sex relationships are just "too dangerous" to legalize.

EXTREME STD RATES

For six years, President Obama's Food and Drug Administration alerted the public about the dangers of the very behavior which defines homosexuality.

Until mid-March 2014, the FDA website warned that anal intercourse "is simply too dangerous to practice" – even when wearing condoms – "because it can cause tissue in the rectum to tear and bleed" and allow diseases to pass easily from one partner to the next.

Even now, data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention backs up this claim, revealing that men who have sex with men have the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases than any other demographic group in the United States, followed by lesbian and bisexual women.

Despite composing less than one percent of the adult population, gay men are responsible for two-thirds of syphilis infections in the United States – each year for the last five years, in fact.

Likewise, three-fourths of HIV infections occur among men who have sex with men—despite nearly two decades of aggressive federal, state and local public relations campaigns to promote "safe sex" within this sexual lifestyle community.

Even gay activists describe these rates of infection as "epidemics."

Likewise, women who have sex with women also are prone to higher infection rates for STDs than women who are exclusively heterosexual – because of high-risk sexual behavior. Remarkably, one study cited by the liberal Guttmacher Institute (the research arm of Planned Parenthood, no

less) even showed that lesbians had more male partners, and more bisexual male partners, in a year than either bisexual or heterosexual women. Lesbians also were three times more likely than heterosexual women to have sex with male injection-drug users, and 50 percent more likely to do so than bisexual women.



DR. WILL HALL
Editor
Louisiana
Baptist Message

HIGH INCIDENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

But concern about same-sex marriage extends beyond the consequences of unnatural sex.

Although the mainstream media portrays LGBT relationships as positive and nurturing, the home environments of lesbians, gay men and bisexuals actually are marked by high incidences of violence.

In 2013, Democrats even forced the rewriting of the Violence Against Women Act to include homosexuals. Moreover, liberals made their case by presenting disturbing findings about the high rates of violence in gay relationships.

A UCLA study published in 2012 illustrates the extent of domestic abuse within LGBT households.

Participants were asked whether they had been a victim of "intimate partner violence" either in the last year or any time since 18 years of age:

■ About 52 percent of bisexual women had experienced IPV during their lifetimes (the highest rate in the study), although it was almost always by the male partner. Lesbians, as well as women who have sex with women but deny being LGB, tied for the second highest rate of violence – with about 32 percent of both groups suffering hurt from an intimate female partner at least once after reaching 18 years of age. Only 22 percent of heterosexual women reported being beaten or threatened by a male partner during adulthood – a figure that is alarming but still the lowest among the comparison groups.

■ In the one year before the study, only 5 percent of heterosexual women experienced battering or threats from their significant other. By comparison, 10 percent of lesbians experienced harm from another woman, 22 percent of women who have sex with women but claim they are not LGB were hurt by a female intimate, and, 27.5 percent of bisexual women were targets

of abuse (but, again mostly by a male partner).

■ Almost 27 percent of gay men reported being "hit, slapped, pushed, kicked" or forced to have sex by a male partner during adulthood compared with 11.4 percent of heterosexual men who said they were "hit, slapped, pushed, kicked" by a female. About 20 percent of bisexual men were beaten up by a male intimate partner, and the same was true for nearly 17 percent of men who have sex with men but deny being LGB.

■ During the year prior, gay men were 2.6 times more likely to get attacked by their male partners than heterosexual men were to be mistreated by their female partners (4.64 percent). About 9 percent of bisexual men and nearly the same number of men who have sex with men but reject being labeled LGB reported being attacked by a male partner.

At least as far back as the Clinton Administration, the FBI has released yearly data showing that the perpetrators of most of the violence against lesbians and gays are their respective lesbian and gay partners.

UNHEALTHY FOR CHILDREN

Finally, serious scholars have debunked the propaganda by gay rights activists "that there is no difference" between gay parenting and parenting by a married mother and father.

Indeed, a study published in the July 2012 volume of *Social Science Research* found that the research cited by homosexual advocates was typified by a "lack of high quality data" and that this deficiency "leaves the most significant questions unaddressed and unanswered."

Dr. Loren Marks, an associate professor of sociology at Louisiana State University, said that these studies typically were small and also biased in choosing which subjects to include – favoring white, upper-middle-class lesbian couples as research subjects instead of randomly sampling the general population to get a truly representative group. Moreover, instead of assessing "hard data" outcomes for children such as school grades, employment rates, poverty, criminality, substance abuse and suicide, these studies tended to examine parenting's influence on such variables as children's gender-role behaviors, emotional functioning and comfort with their sexual identities.

In other words, the cited studies were fluff.

What we do know is that robust research has shown children raised by a mother and father in a family that regularly attends worship services are less likely to drop out of school and more likely to achieve good grades as well as avoid risky behaviors (like pre-marital sex, underage drinking and illegal drug use).

Meanwhile, a number of now-grown children of gay parents are testifying in federal court that kids need both a mother and a father.

Indeed, one said that activist courts and advocacy groups are using children as pawns in order to secure marriage rights for gays and lesbians.

"This is truly human trafficking: manipulating children into existence to satisfy the desires of adults," said Katy Faust, who was raised by her biological mother and lesbian partner since age 10 – when her parents divorced.

"With the redefinition of marriage, we are not simply allowing people to form relationships of their choosing," she said. "They have been doing so for decades."

"Now we are normalizing a family structure where a child will always be deprived daily of one gender influence and the relationship with at least one natural parent. Our cultural narrative becomes one that, in essence, tells children that they have no right to the natural family structure or their biological parents, but that children simply exist for the satisfaction of adult desires," she testified.

JUST TOO DANGEROUS

In the end, the greatest danger of legalizing gay marriage is the spiritual insolence and outright biblical disobedience such a decision would chisel into our national identity.

God's model for marriage transcends sexual intimacy, and instead represents a spiritual relationship of trust, fidelity and commitment that He seeks from us:

Ephesians 5: 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Ignoring His design would further decimate the role of marriage and family in our society, and not only accelerate our slide into cultural decline, but also our fall as a nation toward a spiritual abyss.

Gay marriage is just too dangerous.

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Living in the worst of times

What do you do when you live in the worst of times?

I was a preteen and teenager in the 1960s. Those were very difficult times. I remember well the horror of the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr.



WAYLON BAILEY
Pastor
First Baptist Church
Covington, La.

I lived in the state of Alabama during the Selma march and the turmoil in Birmingham. Those were two tumultuous times. I also saw friends serve in Vietnam and watched the protests on television.

Even in those times, we had a feeling that better days were coming. We knew if we could just get through these times we would be better off on the other side.

Many, many people feel today we are living in the worst of times in America, but it doesn't seem that there is something better on the other side.

What do you do when you feel you are living in the worst of times?

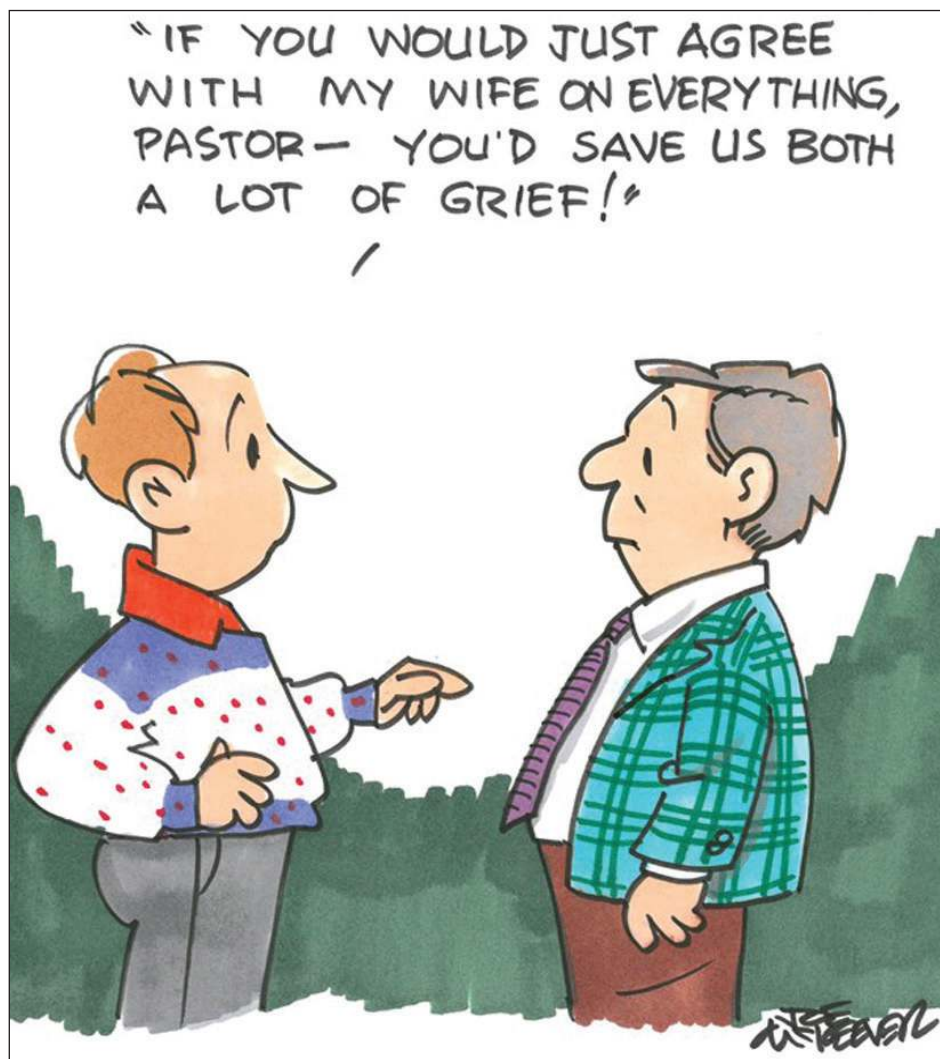
First, you recognize who's in control. This world belongs to the prince of the power of the air. It is his world and his chaos. But, he's not in control.

The Lord God reigns, and He is in control. God has a plan, and He is working His plan.

The Book of Revelation teaches many things. The most important lesson of this great book is that all earthly kingdoms will fail, but God's kingdom reigns forever.

No matter what happens in life, we know God is in control and we can trust Him.

Second, you look for ways to make



a difference and to glorify God in all things.

Difficult times open doors of evangelism and ministry. Many people are open to spiritual things when they fully see that physical plans and systems don't work.

We know not everyone is going to come to faith in Christ. The Bible makes it clear. We should not be discouraged when the harvest is not 100 percent. Jesus told us that in spite of the times the harvest is plentiful. Since the harvest is plentiful, the laborers must be busy about laboring in His harvest.

Third, you let God use these times to exalt and glorify Himself. I believe I see that happening around me. People who are faithful in their ministry and service will be exalted because

God is being glorified in their lives. Therefore, we remain faithful so that God can be glorified through us.

Finally, in the worst of times we can be obedient, faithful, and trustful in God. The psalmist asked the question: "When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" There's a great answer to that question.

If the foundations are being destroyed, the righteous can go on being faithful and righteous.

Let us be a people who go on being faithful no matter what is happening around us.

Would you like to begin everyday with a devotional like this? They are free at waylonbailey.com. Go to "subscribe to Waylon's blog" and follow the simple and easy directions.

Graham: Racism called the world's greatest problem

EDITOR'S NOTE: Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) exists to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by every effective means and to equip others to do the same. Billy Graham was asked in 2006 what he thought was the greatest social problem in the world. His answer, which appeared at billygraham.org, is still applicable today in 2015. Here is the question and Dr. Graham's answer.



BILLY GRAHAM
Evangelist
Montreat, N.C.

QUESTION:

What do you think is the greatest social problem in the world today? Some friends and I were talking about this recently, but we didn't come to any agreement. Whatever it is, do you think churches should be doing anything about it, or is it best left to governments?

GRAHAM RESPONDS: I've often said that in my view, racism is the biggest social problem that we face in the world today, and I believe it still is.

Not only do we have continuing problems with racism in our own country, but racism is a worldwide problem that leads to countless wars and conflicts. It also is at the root of much of the world's injustice and poverty.

Governments have their part to play in solving society's ills, of course – not just racism, but other social problems as well. We need fair laws that will fight corruption and injustice, and we need wise policies that will encourage a better world.

But we also have a responsibility as believers to work for a better world. The Bible tells us to pray for our leaders, so that "we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness" (1 Timothy 2:2).

God told Jeremiah to "seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you. ... Pray to the Lord for it" (Jeremiah 29:7).

Are you doing that?

The problem, however, is that even the wisest leaders and the finest laws can't deal with the most basic problem our world faces – and that is the problem of the human heart. Society is evil because our hearts are evil – and only God can change our hearts.

And He will, as we turn in faith to Christ and ask Him to change us from within. Is that happening in your life?

Just how precious is your time?

NEW ORLEANS – Growing up in the United States, you often hear the saying, "Time = Money."

In the 20th century this phrase brought up ideas of increased productivity and efficiency.

Better use of time equals greater profit. We have even related the value of time to how much money you can command per hour.

Today the phrase is also connected to the idea that time is just as or even more valuable than money. Seeing time as a commodity is an idea generational researchers have noted as a cultural paradigm shift beginning with Gen X and younger generations.

If you think about time as a commodity, it is the one arena of life where everyone is on the same playing field. Each of us is allotted the same amount every day, 24 hours. For the most part, we have a choice how we spend it.



EMILY DEAN
Adjunct Professor
NOBTS
New Orleans

In Psalm 90:12 Moses wrote, "Teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts."

Each day, each moment we make a choice how we will spend our time. As I watch how quickly our children are growing up right before my eyes, I am reminded of the importance of investing well.

We can either spend our days wisely investing in people and things of eternal consequence, or we can let it waste away without being intentional about investing in anything.

I must confess many days I do not see the precious value of time with those who matter most. I get so caught up in the busyness of the day that before I know it, the day is gone.

Like Moses, I have to pray often that God would give me wisdom to order my day so that I would make the wisest use of minutes. Minutes spent well are important because time is precious. It's one of the few things in life we can never get back.

Emily Dean is an adjunct faculty member at NOBTS. Follow her at emilywdean.com.

Handorf never limited God's calling for service with 'labels'

BY BRIAN BLACKWELL

Message Staff Writer

LEESVILLE – To say Lloyd Handorf wears many hats is an understatement.

In the 40 years he has been a member of Old Anacoco Baptist Church, he has held just about every role in the church imaginable, from youth director to interim pastor.

"There was no doubt God's hand was in my coming to Old Anacoco," said Handorf, who serves as music minister. "I always have that clear in my mind. I believe if it is for me to leave for some other place He will be just as clear."

For his service to the church, the Old Anacoco congregation and others who knew him surprised Handorf in a special recognition service. Nearly 225 people attended the day, which included several past members of the church and choir and brother, sister, children, grand-children, nieces, and

in-laws traveling from Colorado and several locations in Texas and Louisiana.

During his time there, Handorf's other roles have included deacon, Sunday school teacher, New York and Nicaragua on mission trips, and committee member. He's even served as Vernon Baptist Association music director and vice moderator.

Pat McRae, Handorf's sister-in-law as well as a fellow member, calls him the heartbeat of the church.

"He's the person if you needed anything he would be there to do it with a smile on his face and laughter," McRae said. "If you have a question about the church, ask Lloyd. If he doesn't know the answer, he knows who can get it for you."

Though Handorf has lived in Leesville for 40 years, he actually spent the first 21 years of his life in his native state of Texas. Born in Palestine, Texas, Handorf had plans to grow up and retire

in the Lone Star State, where he accepted Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and felt the call to ministry.

However, God had other plans for his life.

After graduating from high school in Palestine, Handorf was in the service with the US Army. He spent time serving Christ around the world in Korea, Vietnam, and California to North Carolina.

During that time, he was assigned as a chaplain's administrator. His duties included leading the music portion of the worship services at the chapels where he was assigned, leading choirs at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Chapel in Fort Bragg, NC, and providing a cappella music leadership while having services in the field while in Vietnam.

"We would have services every day in the field because the soldiers were so scattered and couldn't be gathered as a large group," Handorf recalled. "The chaplain (in



Lloyd Handorf is recognized during a special service at Old Anacoco Baptist in Leesville. In the 40 years he has been a member there, he has held just about every role at the church imaginable.

Vietnam) was a Church of God minister and when he found I could sing fairly well, he told me he just knew God had sent me to work with him."

After touring the US and world for more than two decades, Handorf's journey eventually made its way through Fort Polk, an army training base next to Leesville, in early 1975 for a second time. New to the area, Handorf attended the only chapel service he knew about

on the base, where he took basic training in 1963.

After asking Sgt. Larry Datweiller, the chaplain administrator, if any small churches needed someone to lead music, Handorf was introduced to Sgt. Leroy Thompson, a cook in the military, who attended Old Anacoco Baptist church that was needing the services of one.

Handorf met with the

See HANDORF on 10

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GCR from page one

nearly 46,500 congregations which cooperate at various levels (local, state and national) in missions and ministries.

However, these autonomous local bodies support state and national causes believing the leadership at both levels makes a difference in the collective work of Southern Baptists.

So, the five year mark seems a rational point to take a look at how far along the GCR national initiative has moved the Southern Baptist Convention.

COMPONENTS ONE AND TWO

The task force framed all of its recommendations in the context of a mission statement and core values designed to facilitate our convention of churches “working together

more faithfully and effectively” in creating “a new and healthy culture.”

The eight core values (Christ-likeness, truth, unity, relationships, trust, future, local church and Kingdom) are well-stated ideals and actionable, but difficult to measure.

The mission statement (“... to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations.”) essentially is a restatement of Matthew 28:19-20, except, it omits mention of baptism – which is a key measure of effectiveness in assessing mission success.

In 2010, LifeWay reported 331,008 baptisms in the United States and the International Mission Board announced 360,876 baptisms overseas.

Five years later, both dis-

closed drops in their respective data.

The number of conversions fell to 305,301 at home (a five-year loss of 25,707), according to the 2015 Annual Church Profile summary, and IMB’s 2015 Fast Facts show a dip to 190,957 spiritual births abroad. (However, it is not known how much of the 169,919 slump is due to an IMB procedural change started in 2010 to “no longer include reports from partner conventions and unions” in order to more accurately reflect “the board’s work and influence” in the field. Also, although overseas baptisms have fallen from 2010 levels, the 2015 total exceeds the 114,571 baptisms in 2014.)

COMPONENTS THREE, FOUR, SIX, SEVEN

Giving

Although the task force did not set specific goals relating to evangelism and baptisms, in the four statements related to giving and funding, three contained benchmarks about finances.

Calling for “a new level of sacrificial giving” as part of COMPONENT THREE, the ad hoc committee urged churches “to increase the percentage of their Cooperative Program giving,” prevailed upon state conventions to forward a greater percentage of CP funds to national causes, and, asked SBC entities to maximize use of CP monies for taking the Gospel to the nations and leading SBC churches to do the same.

They also took action to “celebrate every dollar given” – another way of saying that churches, and pastors, should get credit for contributions to SBC work, even if outside the channels of the Cooperative Program and special mission offerings for the IMB and the North American Mission Board.

To this end, the panel

crafted a special category, “Great Commission Giving,” into which the CP, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering are lumped together with other designated gifts deemed as contributing to local, state or national Southern Baptist work. This category did not replace Total Missions Expenditures but was added as a new measure of effectiveness.

Implemented in 2011, GCG amounted to \$695,694,322. It has varied during subsequent years, but was reported in 2015 as \$637,498,179, a \$58 million drop from its beginning (and a hefty decline from the \$777,452,820 recorded during the previous year).

As for CP, \$191,763,153 was contributed for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2010, compared with \$186,567,611 received during the fiscal year ending September 20, 2014 (although Baptist Press announced in June that receipts to this point in 2015 are 2 percent ahead of donations for the same time frame in 2014).

The final report also called on Southern Baptists to adopt giving goals “no less than \$200 million annually” for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and “\$100 million annually” through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

The LMCO goal has remained steady at \$175 million from 2010 through 2015, but the annual collection reached a record \$154 million two years ago before dropping by about \$1 million last year.

The AAEO undulated between \$54 million and \$56 million, or so, from 2010-2013 before reaching \$57 million during the last fiscal year. Meanwhile, trustees dropped the annual goal from the \$70 million mark for 2010 to the \$60 million target for 2015.

Planting

COMPONENT FOUR was crafted with the priority of “liberating NAMB to conduct and direct a strategy for reaching the United States and Canada with the Gospel and planting Gospel churches.”

The key recommendation that emerged from this discussion was the “phasing out of Cooperative Agreements” with state conventions, affecting funding in the range of \$51 million. In essence, these funds were redirected from state conventions, and, NAMB’s role for nurturing pioneer state conventions was “left” for the larger state conventions to pick up.

Meanwhile, NAMB missionaries would no longer receive support from states—meaning they would report solely to NAMB and not be jointly supported with state conventions.

So how has church planting improved?

The data does not allow assessment of whether NAMB has succeeded in reprioritizing “to reach metropolitan areas and underserved people groups” as called for by the task force. However, the numbers show that churches planted after the adoption of the GCR recommendations essentially are as healthy as they historically have been in the SBC.

For instance, NAMB shared in 2015 that the “church planting class of 2010” started with 943 church plants with 757 surviving through 2013 (the latest ACP report at the time) – or about 80 percent.

According to findings from the Church Survivability and Health Study 2007, about 81 percent of church plants survive through year three. So the class of 2010 is on target with regard to this metric.

In its 2015 statement, NAMB did not release actual numbers for worship attendance, membership and CP giving for the class of 2010, opting instead to cite percent changes in the averages from year two to year three. But, it is possible to make comparisons with the CSHS 2007 church planting data:

- 7 percent growth in membership (membership information was not assessed in the CSHS 2007 research)

- 20 percent jump in attendance (compared to an estimated 18 percentage point increase for the average church plant in the CSHS 2007 report, or 33 percent jump)

- a ratio of one baptism

See GCR on 15

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Churches should take proper child safety security measures

By BRIAN BLACKWELL
Message Staff Writer

The innocence of a child must be protected at all costs.

Fortunately, the expense can be minimal and the investment will reap dividends for churches that take proper child safety security measures.

That's the consensus among children's ministry staff the *Baptist Message* talked to regarding this sensitive yet important matter.

"It's much less expensive to put these things in place than for a church to have a lawsuit or have their insurance removed," said Carrie Moreau, children's ministries coordinator at Sale Street Baptist Church in Lake Charles. "Isn't it better to be prepared than not prepared? The benefits far outweigh the cost."

Though an improper incident involving an adult and child has never occurred at Sale Street, not taking action

was something the church could not afford.

Their first step was researching what steps other churches had taken. Since the church was undergoing a building renovation, Sale Street instituted security measures in the construction process. Those included installing large windows on each classroom door, placing locks on all storage closets and making a check-in/check-out station.

At the check-in/check-out station, parents of children enter their phone number and their check-in account appears. The system then produces a sticker name tag for the child and a receipt for the parents.

The child's sticker contains medical information as well as any specific instructions the parents have for the child while they are in Sale Street's care.

The child's sticker includes the parent's names, cell phone numbers and a specialized code that is also printed on the guardian tag.

At pick up, the volunteer matches the guardian tag to

the child's tag before releasing them to the parents.

"When we were researching what we should do, we ran across one church that had a father who was a registered sex offender," Moreau said. "They had to put in many safeguards overnight to protect themselves. We didn't want the same thing to happen here, so we took the proper steps beforehand. From what we have heard, all the parents appreciate it because they like to see safeguards in place."

On any given Sunday, between 60 and 70 children participate in the children's ministry at Sale Street, with an average of 40 on Wednesday nights. To work with any minor, adults must complete a background check and be a member or attender for at least six months.

Moreau added that at least two adults are with kids at all time.

"That protects not only the child but the adult," Moreau said. "It's just a great rule of thumb to follow."

According to GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, churches should have a well-executed program to provide against potential sexual abuse and misconduct.

To that end, GuideStone offers six tips to prepare and control. They are:

- Develop a formal sexual abuse and misconduct prevention program. This involves a zero-tolerance stance for sexual abuse and misconduct for those involved with the church.
- Implement sound selection and work practices
- Utilize physical controls, such as fencing in play areas and installing open windows in doors for monitoring.
- Establish training and communication.
- Plan your response to allegations, such as appointing a spokesperson to speak on behalf of the church.
- Maintain oversight and validation on an annual basis.

At Calvary Baptist Church in Alexandria, the education staff along with legal counsel several years ago formed SAFE CHURCH policies, according to children and preschool ministry director Janet Jewell.

These policies and procedures are in place for recruiting, screening, training and overseeing volunteers who serve with preschooler,

children, youth and special needs persons of all ages. One requirement is a background check for all volunteers serving in these areas.

The church has a security team in place that strives to address any issues and protect our people. They also have hired security officers on Sundays, Wednesdays and at events where children participate or where there is a large gathering of people.

Throughout the children's area and student building are security cameras, in addition to windows in classroom doors.

"It is vital to have security policies and procedures in place to protect our children, our volunteers and our church," Jewell said. "We have a plan and that gives peace of mind as we strive to minister to our community."

Though church can take proper precautions, what if a sexual predator shows up?

Sherrie Albritton, minister to children at Fair Park Baptist Church in West Monroe, said churches should know if they are in the rules of the law for a predator.

According to Louisiana State Law, sexual predators must be at least 1,000 feet from a church's child care center or school, though this law specifically pertains to offenders who are convicted of a sex offense against a minor under the age of 13.

For a known sexual offender who is on campus, Albritton said they should not go anywhere alone without a buddy, such as a respectable adult or deacon.

At no time are they allowed in the children's area or work with children, Albritton said.

She also suggested scheduling a personal meeting with the sexual offender to explain church policy regarding children and youth contact.

"Let them know that you love them and so does God but you are responsible to protect them and your congregation, most definitely the children in your church," she said.

The Southern Baptist Convention offers an assortment of records and links at www.sbc.net/churchresources/sexualabuseprevention.asp to better equip a church to exercise diligent scrutiny when hiring staff or choosing volunteers in an attempt to protect the church from the devastating effects of sexual abuse and other moral failures of those in ministry.

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28, Rotary Club, Alexandria

AUGUST
8, North Monroe BC
Jennifer Robertson PraiseFest

9, North Monroe BC

13, NWLBA, Shreveport

16, Alto BC, Mangham

23, FBC Winnfield
Alumni Luncheon

29, Eastside Missionary BC
Minden

30, New Hope BC
Calcasieu



SEPTEMBER
13, FBC Rayville

15, Red River Baptist
Assoc. Annual Meeting
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19 & 20, FBC Covington

21, FBC Mandeville
North Shore Baptist
Assoc. Pastors' Conf.

27, New Life BC, DeRidder



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Awakening

from page one

Floyd, who was reelected to a second term as SBC president, called in his presidential address for Southern Baptists to provide spiritual and moral leadership amid a time of crisis in the world that also is “our most defining hour as Southern Baptists.”

Building on Floyd's address, the June 16 prayer time featured intercession led by 11 pastors and was punctuated by hundreds, if not thousands, of believers kneeling and prostrated at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Dozens more from a broad array of racial and ethnic groups voiced prayers from the platform.

A resolution on “revival and spiritual awakening” said Southern Baptists “faithfully and fervently plead with our great God to open the windows of heaven and come down among His people with a fresh filling of His Spirit.”

MARRIAGE

With a U.S. Supreme Court decision on gay marriage expected in late June, Floyd and the living SBC presidents elected since 1980 issued a joint statement that pledged love for individuals with same-sex attraction yet stated, “We will not accept, nor adhere to, any legal redefinition of marriage issued by any political or judicial body including the United States Supreme Court.” Floyd drew national headlines when he said in his presidential address that he will not perform gay weddings.

A resolution on the “public witness on marriage” called the Supreme Court to “uphold the right of the citizens to define marriage as exclusively the union of one man and one woman.” Southern Baptists will not waver in their defense of traditional marriage regardless of how the court rules, the resolution said.

A presidential panel discussion addressed ways churches can prepare for continuing challenges to biblical sexual morality. Panelists included Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission; R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Rosaria Butterfield, a former lesbian who is now a pastor's wife and defender of traditional marriage.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

To help combat global religious persecution, the ERLC announced the opening of an international religious freedom office in the Mideast and appointed Travis Wussow of Austin, Texas, as director of international justice and religious liberty.

Barronelle Stutzman, a Washington state florist held liable by her state's government for refusing to provide flowers for a same-sex wedding, received a standing ovation when she was introduced during the ERLC report. Naghmeh Abedini, wife of a U.S. pastor imprisoned in Iran for his Christian faith, briefly addressed the SBC Pastors' Conference June 15 and spoke at the Pastors' Wives Conference. Floyd asked God specifically for Saeed Abedini's release during the convention's evening of prayer.

Two resolutions spotlighted religious persecution, with one pledging prayer for “the persecuted church worldwide” and the other specifically denouncing religious persecution and human rights violations in North Korea. The marriage resolution said “the religious liberty of individual citizens or institutions should not be infringed as a result of believing or living according to the biblical definition of marriage.”

ETHNIC DIVERSITY

Messengers received a report from the SBC Executive Committee reviewing the convention's progress on racial reconciliation between 1995-2015. A motion from the floor to commend the EC for its work was adopted, and a resolution pledged messengers' rededication to the work of racial reconciliation.

The Committee on Nominations elected for the coming year is the most diverse in the SBC's history, with 27 percent of members coming from ethnic and minority groups, reported Bryan Smith, chair of the Committee on Committees.

MISSIONARY CELEBRATION

At the joint NAMB-IMB Church and Mission Sending Celebration, messengers were introduced to dozens of North American and international missionaries in a video presentation, then gathered



Baptist Press photo

Newly elected officers of the Southern Baptist Convention are (left to right): Chad Keck, second vice president, pastor of First Baptist Church in Kettering, Ohio; Ronnie Floyd, president, pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas; Steve Dighton, first vice president, pastor of Lenexa Baptist Church in Lenexa, KS.; John Yeats, recording secretary, executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention; and Jim Wells, registration secretary, strategic partners team leader for the Missouri Baptist Convention. The officers were elected during the June 16 afternoon session on the first day of the two-day SBC annual meeting at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio.

around them to pray and offered an ovation of support.

IN OTHER NEWS:

■ IMB President David Platt denied reports that a new personnel policy lowers standards for missionaries. The policy seeks to align the IMB's requirements with the Baptist Faith and Message and does not signal a shift in practice related to speaking in tongues or divorce among other missionary qualifications, Platt said. Messengers did not ask Platt any questions despite media reports that some planned to voice concerns about the revised personnel policy.

■ NAMB President Kevin

Ezell reported 985 church starts in 2014, a 5 percent increase from the previous year. Some 58 percent of last year's church plants were non-Anglo, he said.

■ WMU elected Linda Cooper of Bowling Green, Ky., as president during the missions auxiliary's Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting, June 14-15. Cooper, a member of Forest Park Baptist Church, will replace Debby Akerman, who has served as president for five years.

■ Crossover, the annual evangelistic blitz preceding the annual meeting, yielded at least 4,950 Gospel conversations and 345 professions of faith.

■ Messengers amended an EC recommendation that would have allowed the messengers present at any session of an SBC annual meeting to constitute a quorum. As amended, the EC recommendation maintains the current SBC Bylaw 35 definition of a quorum as “a minimum of 25 percent of those duly registered and seated messengers.”

■ An EC recommendation was approved to change the name of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention. During the first-ever joint report of the six SBC seminaries, Golden Gate reported that

See **AWAKENING** on 11

Resolutions, nominees for Louisiana Baptist posts sought

ALEXANDRIA – Louisiana Baptists are invited to submit names of nominees for service on state convention boards and committees and to submit resolutions for possible consideration for the 2015 Louisiana Baptist Convention.

The Louisiana Baptist Committee on Committees is beginning its work to nominate persons to serve on various state convention committees. Currently, 17 nominees are needed for service on committees on credentials, moral and social concerns, nominations, order of business and resolutions. Committee on committees chair is Jay Johnston, First Covington.

In addition, the Louisiana Baptist Committee on Nominations is beginning its work to fill vacancies on state boards. At this point, 19 nominees are needed to serve on the Convention's Executive Board and as trustees of Louisiana College, the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries, the Baptist Message, and the Baptist Foundation. The committee on nominations chair is Philip Robertson, pastor of Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville.

As in previous years, persons should submit names of nominees and the committee or board for which they are being nominated. Submissions should include information on the nominee's church membership and current employment. Nominations to both committees should be submitted no later than Aug. 17. Nominees for committees should be sent to Jay Johnston, 16333 Highway 1085, Covington, LA 70433 or jayjohnston@gmail.com. Nominees for boards should be sent to Philip Robertson, 317 Philadelphia Road, Pineville, LA 71360 or pastor@pbcministry.com. Also, persons interested in submitting resolutions for this fall's state convention are

asked to submit their statements by Aug. 22. The first meeting of the resolutions committee is Sept. 22. Resolutions must be submitted to the committee for review and consideration no sooner than ninety (90) days, but no later than fifteen (15) days, prior to the LBC annual meeting. Early submissions allow the LBC Resolutions Committee to begin its work to determine which resolutions to present to the Convention. Resolutions should be typewritten, titled, dated and accompanied by a letter from a church qualified to send a messenger to the annual meeting of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. Churches must certify the person submitting the resolution is a member

in good standing and should complete contact information for that person and his or her church. No person may submit more than three resolutions per year. The resolutions committee chair is Tim Norris, First, Livingston. Persons should mail proposed resolutions to the resolutions committee through the LBC Office of Public Affairs. They may be mailed to P. O. Box 311, Alexandria, LA 71309, faxed to 318.449.4287, or e-mailed to OPA@LouisianaBaptists.org.

If you need assistance with the wording of a resolution, you may also contact by phone or email LBC Public Affairs Officer Will Hall at 318.448.3402 or OPA@LouisianaBaptists.org.

Submitted photo

Lloyd and Priscilla Handorf, who have faithfully served at Old Anacoco Baptist Church for more than 40 years were honored recently by the church.

Handorf said he is grateful for all of the encouragement his wife, children and parents showed toward him. "It's an absolute necessity," Handorf said. "All of my family is involved in some kind of ministry wherever they may be. They understand and accept you being absent for birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. My mother and father set an example for each of us five children to follow and we all have tried to do the best we can. God was always first in our home."

His three sons – one of which is a deacon and his wife plays the keyboard – and daughters are not music ministers but active in ministry at their respective churches and one daughter is worship leader at her respective church where her husband is pastor. His wife, Priscilla (Sippy), is the nursery coordinator at Old Anacoco Baptist. His brother is music director at Memory Lane Baptist in Palestine, Texas and his wife is a pianist, while another brother who died

Handorf from page six

Pastor Homer Fondren of Old Anacoco Baptist Church, Leroy Thompson, Edmund Smart, and Charles Underwood from the church, who invited him to lead music for their prayer meeting that following Wednesday evening. And, of course, Handorf has remained at Old Anacoco Baptist Church ever since. To faithfully serve a church in so many capacities for 40 years, support from one's family is vital. Handorf said he is grateful for all of the encouragement his wife, children and parents showed toward him. "It's an absolute necessity," Handorf said. "All of my family is involved in some kind of ministry wherever they may be. They understand and accept you being absent for birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. My mother and father set an example for each of us five children to follow and we all have tried to do the best we can. God was always first in our home."

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Submitted photo

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Handorf said he is grateful for all of the encouragement his wife, children and parents showed toward him. "It's an absolute necessity," Handorf said. "All of my family is involved in some kind of ministry wherever they may be. They understand and accept you being absent for birthdays, anniversaries and holidays. My mother and father set an example for each of us five children to follow and we all have tried to do the best we can. God was always first in our home."

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SBC resolutions on key issues garner broad consensus

By TOM STRODE

Baptist Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (BP) — Messengers to the 2015 Southern Baptist Convention adopted nine resolutions — some on culturally divisive issues — with almost no opposition.

All the resolutions offered in the Tuesday afternoon session (June 16) at the SBC's meeting gained passage by unanimous or nearly unanimous votes. The messengers affirmed biblically based stances on such topics as same-sex marriage, racial reconciliation and the sanctity of human life, as well as religious persecution and pornography. Approved resolutions also called for spiritual awakening and celebrated the 90th anniversary of the Cooperative Program.

Prior to the convention, the Resolutions Committee received only four resolutions, an unusually small number. As a result, the committee initiated more resolutions than normal, but committee chairman Steve Gaines said finding topics proved no problem.

"There are so many pressing issues morally and spiritually in our nation right now, it really didn't take long to figure that out," Gaines said at a news conference after the committee's report.

He illustrated for reporters what he meant by pointing to a few of the resolutions.

"When it comes to our nation, when you look back at just the last 12 to 18 months, racial reconciliation needs to be at the top of our list,"



Baptist Press photo

Messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting vote on a resolutions report by raising ballots June 16 during the afternoon session at the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, Ohio

said Gaines, senior pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., a suburb of Memphis. "All of us who have children or grandchildren are very concerned about pornography. All of us are concerned about abortion and not just abortion but the sanctity of life on both ends."

He added, "It's not hard in light of what's going on with [the self-proclaimed Islamic State of Iraq and Syria] and what's going on in North Korea and other places to make resolutions" on religious persecution.

The approved resolutions: ■ urged the Supreme Court in its decision this summer to affirm the right of citizens to limit marriage to a

male-female union, reasserted the SBC's belief in the biblical view of marriage no matter how the justices rule and called for religious freedom for individuals and organizations who conscientiously object to same-sex marriage.

■ called for SBC churches and entities to work toward racial and ethnic diversity in their leaders and encouraged Southern Baptists to be "faithful ambassadors of reconciliation."

■ affirmed the sanctity of human life "at all stages of development" and exhorted Southern Baptists to seek "the repeal of unjust laws and inhumane practices that degrade human life."

■ denounced all religious

persecution and called for Southern Baptists to pray for persecuted Christians during personal times and corporate worship.

■ appealed to the North Korean government to respect human rights and urged the U.S. government to pressure North Korea to recognize the religious freedom of its citizens.

■ expressed grief over the destructive impact of pornog-

raphy and affirmed the power of the Gospel of Jesus to deliver those who have committed sexual immorality.

■ pledged a commitment by Southern Baptists to seek God and to pray that He would bring revival.

■ expressed gratitude to God upon the 90th anniversary of the Cooperative Program for His leadership in its establishment and encouraged Southern Baptist churches to consider increases in their giving through it.

■ thanked God and all those who helped with this year's meeting.

In presenting the resolutions to the messengers, the committee "knew that we were speaking on very important issues that we are facing in our culture and that I as a pastor think about that every time I preach," Gaines said.

"We want to speak the truth, but we always want to do it in love and redemption," he told reporters. "And we are not in any way angry with anybody. We love everybody. But when you love the Lord, you have to say what the Bible says."

Messengers approved amendments to three of the resolutions presented by the committee. All those changes were welcomed by the committee as friendly amendments.

Awakening from page 9

the relocation of its primary campus to Southern California should be complete by the summer of 2016.

■ Messengers approved an EC recommendation to amend NAMB's ministry assignment, enabling the con-

vention's entity charged with facilitating North American missions to "provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the International Mission Board in assisting churches to plant churches for specific groups outside the

United States and Canada." EC leaders said in February that the possibility of military chaplains facing religious liberty constraints in their ministry to troops overseas was a key factor in the recommendation.



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Antioch Baptist Church enjoys time at FUGE Camp at Mississippi College

BY ANDY KANENGISER

Miss. College Communications

CLINTON, Miss. – Antioch Baptist Church kids and parents enjoyed every mile of the journey to a FUGE Christian camp at Mississippi College.

Worship services, quiet moments for Bible study, sports, fellowship time and much more were a real blessing for the church delegation from Farmerville, Louisiana.

The annual June trip to the 5,000-student Baptist-affiliated university in Clinton was the sixth for parent chaperones like David C. Byrnes. He calls it his

best one yet.

“We love coming to Mississippi College because of its location and the facilities are great,” Byrnes says. “The camp pastor was awesome and we had two kids get saved.”

Seventeen children and seven parents were part of this summer’s contingent from Antioch Baptist Church.

Well-known for its Louisiana Watermelon Festival in late July and fun adventures to go fishing, boating and swimming at D’Arbonne State Park, Farmerville is sandwiched between Monroe and Ruston.

So, the trip for the Louisi-

ana church delegation is a quick two-hour and 15-minute ride on I-20 to the Clinton, Miss. campus.

Once they get off the bus, they see a Clinton campus that’s steeped in history.

Founded in 1826, Mississippi College remains the nation’s second oldest Baptist college and the oldest institution of higher learning in the Magnolia State.

The landmark Provine Chapel opened in 1860 and was once used as a hospital for the wounded Civil War troops of Union General Ulysses S. Grant.

While Byrnes and several other chaperones made the trek for several years to MC for the Southern Baptist Convention’s FUGE camp, it was the first visit for Kevin Brantley. He traveled with his three sons.

He enjoyed the worship and preaching and really everything else about the FUGE camp at MC.

“Kevin said the camp was unbelievable,” Byrnes said. “He was closer to God right now than he’s ever been.”

This year’s number of Mississippi College summer campers in June and July will exceed 6,000 boys and girls. That includes the blitz of Christian



Andy Kanengiser/Mississippi College photo

Members of Antioch Baptist Church in Farmerville attended a five-day FUGE Christian summer camp at Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College. Pictured on the Clinton, Miss., campus are seven adults who accompanied the 17 children from the North Louisiana church in mid-June. Back row: Kevin Brantley, Gary Mashaw, Lauren Cater and David Byrnes. Front row: Terry Albritton, Leslie Culp and Sherri Byrnes.

camps plus those for sports like football, basketball, volleyball, cheerleading and soccer.

Every year, there are scores of Baptist churches represented from across the Bayou State. MC continuing education director Ken Gilliam, who oversees the camps, says the largest number of Baptist church campers outside Mississippi come from Louisiana.

Then, it’s Alabama and Texas, in that order.

“The Louisiana children come from all over – from New Orleans, Shreveport, Bastrop, Monroe, and Alexandria,” Gilliam says.

Typically many of the kids from Louisiana come sporting the hats, T-shirts and other gear

from LSU, especially since the Tigers were playing in the College World Series in Omaha.

It can get noisy at times during worship services at Swor Auditorium led by the contemporary Christian band, Yeshua’s Brand, from Huntsville, Ala. And the same is true during meals served at the cafeteria.

For children from Louisiana and a dozen other states, many life-changing moments occur while they learn God’s word.

It makes summer camp at Mississippi College an impactful experience.

And a few years some of the “graduates” from these SBC summer camps may return to the Clinton campus to become students at Mississippi College.

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LC’s Division of Business receives 10-year accreditation reaffirmation

BY NORM MILLER

LC Communications

PINEVILLE –The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) reaffirmed on June 6 the accreditation of Louisiana College’s Division of Business.

“Achieving ACBSP reaffirmation is a rigorous process,” said Cheryl Clark, LC’s interim vice president for academic affairs. “Each accreditation standard assesses a college’s ability to perform in critical areas, such as teaching, research, curricula development, and student learning.”

“This reaffirmation of accreditation for our Division of Business is a credit to our exceptional faculty who clearly

and compellingly teach with a commitment to quality,” she said. “Every one of our professors cares deeply about the college and about making sure that students have a tremendous experience during their years at LC.”

First accredited in 1995, LC’s Division of Business is one of the oldest members of ACBSP.

“ACBSP’s reaffirmation of accreditation confirms that Louisiana College’s business program meets the standards of excellence in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, student and stakeholder focus, measurement and analysis of student learning and performance, faculty and staff focus, and education and busi-

See LC on 13

LC from page 12

ness process management,” said Arthur Mazhambe, LC’s Chair, Division of Business; and associate professor of business.

“Our Division of Business is deemed to have properly credentialed faculty and adequate resources for managing the business program and to appropriately pursue the mission of the college,” Mazhambe said. “Our division is confident that its history of providing a quality business program will continue.”

“Our current and future students can feel confident they will receive a degree with full programmatic accreditation and recognition. ACBCP accreditation is affirmation of the quality and integrity of Louisiana College’s business degree program,” said Mazhambe.

“What Dr. Mazhambe and our Division of Business faculty have accomplished reflects dedication and hard work,” said LC president Rick Brewer. “Higher education requires superior efforts, and the ACBSP has acknowledged that by reaffirming the accreditation of our Division of Business.”

ERLC from page one

ness and champion advocacy through research and storytelling.

■ “Collaborate with Baptist Global Response for advocacy and awareness of human needs opportunities.

■ “Develop strategic relationships with like-minded organizations to advance advocacy efforts.”

Moore called the Mideast office “a historic moment for the ERLC” and the location “a strategic key to working for religious liberty with world leaders, especially in the Middle East.”

Moore said Wussow has “the convictional leadership and Gospel courage that leading this office requires, and his work will be of immeasurable value in the ERLC’s goal of advocating for soul freedom around the globe.”

Prior to his appointment as director of international justice and religious liberty, Wussow served as an ERLC legal consultant and as an executive pastor and general counsel for the Austin Stone Community Church in Austin, Texas. Wussow holds a juris doctor and an undergraduate degree in finance from the University of Texas.

“Every day around the world,” Wussow said, “religious minorities face persecution and millions of people are held in slavery. We look forward to advocating on their behalf.”

LOUISIANA NOTABLES

ON THE MOVE

■ **B.K. Miller** is new interim pastor at Cypress Baptist Church, West Monroe.

HOMEcoming

■ Richey Baptist Church, Deville: **71st homecoming celebration**, July 5, 10 a.m. - noon. Dinner on the grounds will follow the service. Speaker: Former pastor Bob Galloway. Pastor: Grady Dodge.

■ University Baptist Church, Lake Charles: **50th anniversary celebration with an open house**, July 11, 2-4 p.m. Refreshments will be served and all former pastors and members are invited to attend. For more information call 337.480.9410 (Monday-Wednesday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.). Pastor: Carlys Beard.

■ Hillcrest Baptist Church, Franklinton: **Church anniversary celebration**, July 19, 11 a.m. at the Education Building at the Washington Parish Fair Grounds. Attendees will meet in Education Building for a brief program and then proceed to the newly renovated Flower House for a pot luck meal/picnic. Pastor: Andrew Voss.

REVIVAL

■ Richey Baptist Church, Deville: **Revival**, Aug. 23-26, 7 p.m. nightly. Evangelist: **Scotty McDowell**. Pastor: Grady Dodge.

LAGNIAPPE

■ **Randy Bowman is seeking interim, bi-vocational or pastor position** preferable in the southern portion of Louisiana. Please call 337.441.9637.

■ First Baptist Church, Lafayette: **Ice Cream Fellowship**, July 5, 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your ice cream, cookies and brownies beginning at 5:30 p.m. Judging will begin at 5:45 and the goodies will be served at 6 p.m. Pastor: Steve Horn.

■ Fair Park Baptist Church, West Monroe: **Art Camp for Children**, July 6-10, 9 a.m. - noon. Cost: \$40. This camp is for first through fifth grade. For more information, call the church office at 318.396.6306. Pastor: Waymond Warren.

■ Elwood Baptist Church, Forest Hill: **Vacation Bible School: The Journey Begins**, July 6-9, 8:45 a.m. - noon. Commence-

ment and Family Night will be July 10, 5 p.m. Pre-K through sixth grade. To pre-register or for more information, contact Pastor Mike Evans at 318.308.3596.

■ Hebron Baptist Church, Denham Springs: **2015 Mission Sports Camp**, July 6-8, 9 a.m.-noon. Cost: Free. This camp, which is for children in grades first through fifth, will be put on by the Missions Team from FBC Wildwood. To register your child, call the church office at 225.665.6278. Pastor: Joe Alain.

■ Philadelphia Baptist Church, Deville: **Worship Arts Day Camp**, July 8-9, 9 a.m. - noon. Cost: \$15 per student (for those who have completed kindergarten through the sixth grade). The camp will offer t-shirt art, drama, clowning, creative movement, puppets and human video. Pastor: Philip Robertson.

■ First Baptist Church, Haynesville: **James W. Bailey Memorial Golf Tournament FBC WEE Care fundraiser**, July 11, 8:30 a.m. This is a 27-hole, two person scramble. Entry Fee: \$150 per team (includes lunch, soft drinks, water and sports beverages). For more information, contact Jerry Smith at 318.624.0022 or Babs Maddox at 318.624.1619. Pastor: Shelby Cowling.

■ Toledo Bend Baptist Resort Ministry Center, Zwolle: **Annual Open House Celebration**, July 11, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Cost: Free. There will be hamburgers and hot dogs along with all the trimmings; activities for the children. Bring your family and friends and enjoy an afternoon of safe fun and fellowship. For more information or directions, call Mary Gore at either 318.645.6601 or 318.452.9731.

■ Judson Baptist Church, Walker: **Church and Community Fiesta Picnic**, July 19, 4 p.m. There will be food, games, and piñatas. Also a table will be set up to collect toys and dollar donations for candy for Mexico. There will be water slides (kids bring your swim suits and towels). For more information call the church office at 225.665.5481. Pastor: David Lane.

■ First Baptist Church, Jena: **Children’s Music Camp**, July 20-24, 10-11:30 a.m. for ages pre-K thru second grade; July 27-31, 10-11:30 a.m. for grades third through fifth. Cost: Free. Children will be introduced to basic music theory and learn to recognize the different groups of instruments (along with an elementary introduction to the keyboard). Enrollment is limited. Deadline to sign up is July 10. For more information or to sign up, call the church office at 318.992.4184.

Scripture Crypto

By **CHERYL VAUGHN**
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The Scripture Crypto is a Bible verse in which one letter has been substituted for another, thus encoding the verse. To find out what the verse is, you must determine what each letter is a substitute for. An “a,” for example, may stand for a “t” in this week’s issue of the ScriptureCrypto. Next week, “a” could stand for a “d.” Each week, each letter is different. Solve by trial and error. The answer will be given next week. Note: All numerals, such as those in the scripture reference after the verse, are spelled out.

zorbb t eosx eras ck gdsri, rxi ck qresd, rxi ck

mbszo eore t orps atbbsi myd ck zosrdsdz, rxi ntps te

fxey csx, qoyc t axyq xye qosxhs eosk gs?

mtdze zrcfsb eqsxek-mtps:sbspsx

Clues:
Z = S; T = I

Answer to June 18, Scripture Crypto:
John thirteen: one

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Please send résumés to
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Send résumé to: Pastor Search Committee
1001 N. Tool Drive • Tool, Texas 75143
or email it to: vicki@fbctool.com

903.432.2711

www.fbctool.com

Bi-Vocational PASTOR

Harmony Baptist Church in Glenmora is seeking a bi-vocational pastor.

Please send résumés to:
Harmony Baptist Church,
Pastor Search Committee,
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or email to richardh61143@gmail.com

SEEKING A FULL TIME SENIOR PASTOR

New Hebron Baptist Church in Waskom, Texas is seeking a full-time senior pastor.

Please submit résumés to:
Pastor Search Committee at nhbc@eastex.net
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SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH IN MENA, AR., is prayerfully seeking a bi-vocational or full-time pastor. Please send résumés to Chairman David Smith, 155 Alder Creek Ln., Mena, AR 71953 or email to smithsinmena@att.net.

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GCR from page one

for every 13 members (church plants in the CSHS 2007 study typically baptized 13 people in year three while averaging about 73 in worship service, for a ratio of about 1:6)

NAMB also shared that altogether, the class of 2010 contributed \$3.3 million to missions (up 12 percent for the year), or just under \$4,360 of giving per church plant (through the Cooperative Program, LMCO and AAEO, combined).

Total receipts for church plants in the CSHS 2007 averaged \$70,000 per congregation, but there was no data showing how much each church plant spent on cooperative ministries and missions.

Except for baptism-to-attendance ratios, the class of 2010 appears to be on par with previous church planting year groups. That's not to dismiss the importance of this metric – it's an essential measure of evangelistic effectiveness. But a single year of low baptism data may not point to trouble.

If the class of 2010 continues to lag their peer groups, Southern Baptists might have cause for concern. Likewise, if the classes of 2011-2015 aren't keeping pace, then it would be reasonable to suspect something systemic might be amiss.

As for Louisiana church plants, among the seven that are members of the class of 2010, two submitted worship attendance and baptism information for 2013. One reported a ratio of 1:28 and the other 1:8. But The Covenant Church in Benton tallied 20 baptisms while averaging 150 in worship services, a 1:8 ratio, during its third year (the reference point for NAMB's class of 2010).

In any case, even with good news about the 2010 cohort, the 757 church plants still existing today do not come close to meeting the need that existed in 2010, and our church plant numbers in subsequent years have not kept up with the needs that have expanded each year since.

The population of the United States increased by 11 million people from 2010 through the start of this year (about half the growth was the result of immigration), creating the need for an estimated 110,000 new churches (based on an average of 100 members per congregation).

Altogether, an estimated 30 percent of the U.S. population is not Christian – about 96 million – meaning we need

about 960,000 new church plants, if that is going to be our main means of evangelizing the lost.

Shifting Locus and Funding

The task force used COMPONENT SIX to state their belief that “the state conventions must take the lead” in stewardship education and promotion of the Cooperative Program.

Specifically, their recommendation encouraged the SBC Executive Committee, which has responsibility for both ministry assignments, “to work with the state conventions ... in developing a strategy for encouraging our churches to greater participation and investment in the Cooperative Program.”

Citing urgency, they set a deadline of 2013.

The 2011 SBC Annual documents that the SBC EC adopted a recommendation that year “stating it will pursue an enhanced relationship among and between the state conventions, the associations, the entities and the Executive Committee for the purpose of developing an holistic and unified approach in promoting the entire Cooperative Program and stewardship education across the Southern Baptist Convention.”

COMPONENT SEVEN had a more tangible impact on the SBC EC.

The 23 members of the GCR panel expressed hope “to see Southern Baptists break the ‘50 percent barrier’” by taking one percentage point from the Executive Committee's allocation of 3.4 percent of the CP budget for national entities, and redirecting it to the IMB.

In real terms, that meant just under a \$2 million loss for the Executive Committee, which had a 2010 budget of about \$6.9 million (including funds from all sources).

To date, the Executive Committee has reduced its CP allotment to 2.99 percent, boosting the IMB's share of the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget to 50.41 percent.

No other national entity has contributed any portion of their respective CP allocation to the IMB.

But, the IMB also receives about 69 percent of all designated funds given to national causes, and its \$300 million operating budget is significantly more than any other national entity which receives

CP support.

COMPONENT FIVE

The suggestion to blur the divide between “home” and “foreign” missions by letting the IMB expand its ministry assignment to include “reaching unreached and underserved people groups without regard to any geographic limitation,” raised suspicions of a move to merge the NAMB with the IMB – particularly in light of comments a year earlier by NAMB's chairman of trustees that Southern Baptists should have “a singular world mission agency.”

But what actually resulted was a change in the IMB's ministry assignments to allow them to “provide specialized, defined and agreed upon assistance to the North American Mission Board in assisting churches to reach unreached and underserved people groups within the United States and Canada.”

News articles have highlighted how teams from the two missions groups already have met at least twice “to trade ideas,” and, for “cross-pollination” which could “multiply the effectiveness of reaching the unreached wherever they are.”

MOVING FORWARD

Unfortunately, despite the broad scope of recommendations by the Great Commission Task Force, as yet, these reforms have not turned around the negative trends identified as signs the “Great Commission commitment is diminishing

among us.”

So what are Southern Baptists to do?

En Masse

Mass evangelism might be one answer.

At the heart of the matter, it's simple math.

If we desire mass baptisms, we should be emphasizing mass evangelism efforts.

Billy Graham proved it can work in major urban settings – 3.2 million professions of faith over the course of 417 crusades.

Other Southern Baptist evangelists like Georgia's Rick Gage have shown it continues to work in small towns, too—about 2,900 salvation decisions during eight U.S. campaigns, 2013-2014; and, Louisiana's Bill Britt has proved its effectiveness overseas, at least 70 times, recording 20,000 salvation decisions during a four-day outreach in Kenya (2005), for example.

On Fertile Ground

Likewise, perhaps we should consider the proposal by Robin Dale Hadaway, professor of missions at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri.

In October 2014, Hadaway offered that part of the problem with international missions has been a focus on reaching resistant people groups at the expense of a harvest among receptive populations.

He argued for at least a balance in where we concentrate our resources, suggesting we are leaving sheaves of crops in the fields while trying to gather a few grains among thistles. He did not recommend Southern Baptists abandon such countries,

but reasoned that we should at least consider whether our strategy based on reaching people groups is the best approach for reaching more lost individuals.

Moreover, his proposal to focus more on “receptive” regions and less on “resistant” ones might have value for how we do evangelism in the U.S.

Identify and Engage the Experts

There are some real evangelism experts out there, experienced soul winners with the track record to prove it, and we should be listening to them.

These aren't necessarily personalities who grace conference platforms, year in and year out, nor prolific writers with multiple titles on the shelves of LifeWay's stores, or consultants with hyper-worded biographies.

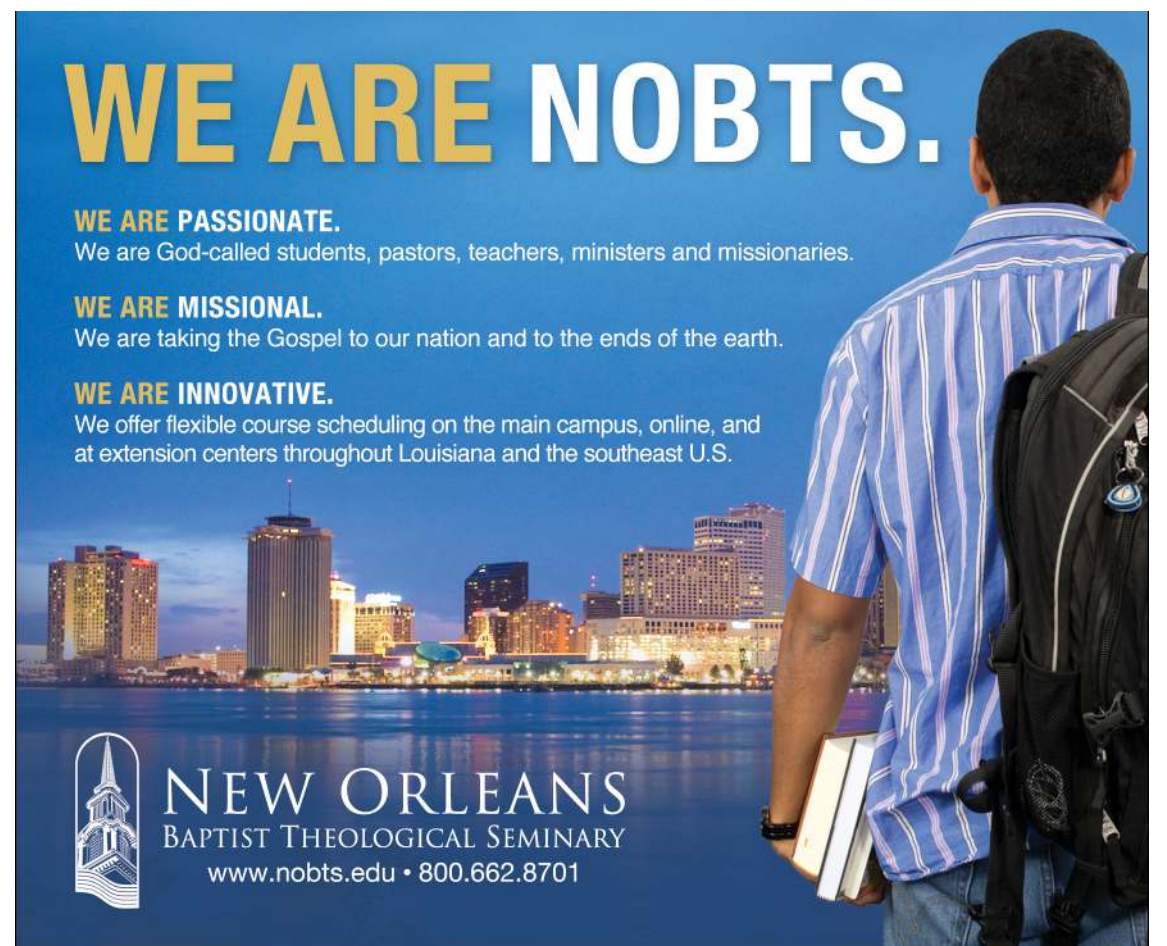
They simply are men and women gifted by God and committed to the task of evangelism.

We don't need to take them out of the field, where they are desperately needed. But we can ask them to help us develop a plan for reaching the lost on the scale we know is needed.

Moreover, whatever plan they might suggest, we can follow Daniel's example and test the concept.

Naaman, the commanding general of the Syrian army, resisted when Elisha sent word for him to wash in the Jordan seven times in order to be healed. That is, until a servant asked Naaman if he would have complied if the prophet had told him to do something great.

One lesson Naaman learned: It's not about doing something grand, it's about doing something that works.




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Disaster Relief from page 3

Baptist Church in Shreveport.

For those not trained to serve on mud-out teams, disaster relief officials held sessions at two churches on June 22 to instruct new volunteers.

Twenty-two people attended the training at Summer Grove Baptist Church in Shreveport and another nine went to Alford Heights Baptist Church in Many.

JOINT EFFORT

Outside of Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief, VOAD partners who are helping with the recovery effort are the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Food Bank and several local, state and federal governmental agencies.

"It takes all these teams to make this effort a successful," Cupper said. "This operation includes many Southern Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers from the local area as well as all across our state."

One company that recently pledged financial support for work of the disaster relief teams is Home Depot. Disaster relief officials met with local and regional Home Depot personnel, who said the company will help financially with efforts to clean up homes affected by the flooding in Shreveport-Bossier.

"As we visited several of the flooded homes that were being cleaned out, a delegation of Home Depot Pro executives from the Southern regions of the US joined us to get an understanding of just what is involved in doing mud-out work after a flood," said Gibbie McMillan, Louisiana Baptists State disaster relief director who attended a meeting with the executives on June 23. "They asked questions in an effort to understand how they could help in term of providing supplies that would be needed for doing this kind of work."

"They were extremely

interested in connecting with Louisiana Baptists Disaster Relief," he said. "Two other Baptist state directors were also present for this viewing, Terry Henderson with Texas Baptist Men, and Randy Garrett with Arkansas Baptists. There are many ways we can work together in the future and the possibilities are endless."

TORNADO RELIEF WORK

Floods weren't the only disaster keeping teams busy.

A disaster relief chain-saw unit from First Baptist Church Blanchard on June 19 cleared a tree that fell on the home of a 90-year-old Sarah Stokes after a small tornado knocked down trees and power lines on Laura Street in Mansfield.

The unit completed a total of five jobs in DeSoto Parish. The damage was caused by a band of strong storms that resulted in two tornadoes on June 18 in Desoto Parish.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), an EF-1 tornado touched down just after 4 a.m. near Polk



Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas Baptist Disaster Relief officials enjoy a meal with Home Depot executives and workers at a Shreveport restaurant on June 23. Home Depot has connected with Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief and is providing assistance with efforts to clean up homes affected by flooding in the Shreveport-Bossier city area.

and Laura Street in Mansfield. Reports indicated it was only on the ground for about a minute before lifting near North Hills Drive.

NWS says a second EF-1 tornado touched down more than two hours later just after 6:30 a.m. near Gloster.

The tornado damaged the Kickapoo community just

west of the intersection of Louisiana Highway 5 and Louisiana Highway 171.

It remained on the ground for about three and a half miles before lifting on Red Bluff Road.

Both tornadoes left a trail of destruction; damaging homes, knocking down trees, limbs and power lines.

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