

FRUITFUL

ALABAMA BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION

NOVEMBER 2022



annual report

*Highlights of missions
and ministry in
Alabama Baptist life*

Contents

05

A note from the editor-in-chief

Fruitful's opportunity as creative annual report for Alabama Baptists



06

A word from the president

Champion reflects on generosity, faithfulness of Alabama Baptists

09

Welcome to Shades Mountain Baptist

Greetings to messengers from pastor George Wright and a map of the church



12

State Board of Missions

Reflecting on the missions and ministry efforts of the past year, looking expectantly to the future



18

Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers

Serving, celebrating senior adults in residential setting

22

Alabama WMU

Focusing on missions discipleship

26

The Baptist Foundation of Alabama

New faces, same ministry to help Alabama Baptist churches thrive financially



28

State convention schedule

Order of business for the annual state convention

30

University of Mobile

On mission to 'prove faithful'



34

Shocco Springs

Celebrating 75 years of camp and conference ministry in 2023

38

Alabama Citizens Action Program

Serving as a vital link between people in the pews and state legislators

40

Alabama Baptist Children's Homes

Speaking love into the lives of the most vulnerable



44

Alabama Baptist Historical Commission

Preserving personal stories and spiritual legacies



46

Samford University

Earning recognition for undergraduate teaching, value

52

TAB Media

Stories podcast features kidney transplant from pastor to member

FRUITFUL

A special publication of The Alabama Baptist in partnership with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions for our friends, supporters and messengers to the 2022 Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting, November 15-16, 2022, at Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Vestavia Hills.

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COVER PHOTO:
A drone image captures the Birmingham skyline as seen from atop Red Mountain. The mountain was the site of several mines in the city's post-Civil War era, all of which supplied ore to Birmingham's iron furnaces. The Birmingham metro area is home to six Baptist associations made up of nearly 400 churches.

Photographer: Sam Evans, TAB Media

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

What an honor it is for me to tag along with such a top-notch slate of dedicated Alabama Baptist entity and State Board of Missions leaders. I also love the way deep friendships are continually growing among the many gifted team members sprinkled throughout all our ministries.

As you might expect, we chat often and find every opportunity possible to partner. While technically separate organizations, we all are committed to be faithful stewards of your generous gifts through the Cooperative Program, and working together is one way to accomplish that goal.

Fruitful is an excellent example. We at The Alabama Baptist and TAB Media Group are honored to serve our sister Alabama Baptist entities and the State Board by sharing stories in this annual publication.

Part-feature magazine, part-annual report, you'll find highlights from each group working faithfully within our ecosystem known as the Alabama Baptist State Convention. We are sad not to have Judson College as part of our coverage this year because of its

closure in July 2021. However, we are grateful Judson president Daphne Robinson was able to provide an update and goodbye in last year's Fruitful.

You'll find the Table of Contents on pages 2 and 3. It provides the perfect way to find your favorite entities quickly. Of course, we hope you will take time to read about all the work taking place in the state.

If you are attending the state convention annual meeting at Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Vestavia Hills, be sure to stop by to say hello. Making your way to the exhibits will provide the best opportunity to catch most, if not all, entity leaders and team members.

You know where to find me — press table or press room. I'll be waiting on that hug.

Jennifer

Jennifer Davis Rash

TAB
MEDIA GROUP



Buddy Champion (pictured), pastor of First Baptist Church Trussville, serves as state convention president. Morgan Bailey, pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church in Ranburne, is first vice president and Jarman Leatherwood, pastor of House of Hope and Restoration Church in Huntsville, is second vice president.

BY BUDDY CHAMPION
President, Alabama Baptist State Convention

A word from the president

Champion reflects on generosity, faithfulness of Alabama Baptists

Aren't you glad we made it to this point? We completed a tumultuous summer with the heat of Alabama and the new normal of life with COVID, and now we enjoy much cooler weather! On top of all this, Thanksgiving is right around the corner.

We have been amazed at God's goodness to us as we seek to serve His people during this unique time. It should cause us to celebrate the fact that He and His people have remained so faithful during these days.

Now we have this time to gather together. Isn't it good to see one another again? What a blessing!

While we are together, why don't we seek to encourage one

another? Give someone a kind smile, a warm greeting and an encouraging word.

Take a few minutes and introduce yourself to our new state missionaries, catch up with those who have been faithfully serving for years and look for new team members who may be at their first Alabama Baptist State Convention. I can assure you that they are amazed at what they are experiencing!

I have had the privilege of visiting with our entities and their leaders this year. What a great job they are doing! Spend some time with them and hear about the great things God is doing in their ministries. Alabama Baptists are a group like no other.

Once again, we lead the nation in Cooperative Program giving. Isn't that amazing?

We are not the largest convention or the most prosperous state, but we are a group of believers who have passion to reach people for Christ and to teach them to obey what He has taught us.

God is honoring our efforts in unprecedented ways.

We have gathered together to reflect on what He has done and to dream about what He has in store for our future. As we spend time together, let's once again model our gratitude for God's kindness as the rest of the world observes our fellowship. They are watching; let's make Him shine and celebrate His goodness to us!



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

FUELING THE GREAT COMMISSION



As followers of Christ, we are united in the hope of the Gospel, and we are called to take the message of salvation to our neighbors across the street and around the world. As members of the body of Christ, we are commended to share our resources in reaching a lost and dying world. As Alabama Baptists, we are united in fueling missions and ministry through the Cooperative Program.

WE ACCOMPLISH MORE TOGETHER THAN WE EVER COULD ALONE!

For **FREE RESOURCES** and other information about the Cooperative Program, visit AlabamaCP.org or contact State Missionary Jay Stewart, jstewart@alsbom.org, (334) 613-2283.



Alabama Baptist
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SHADES MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Dear Alabama Baptists,

We're grateful to host our state's annual meeting at Shades Mountain. As a convention of churches passionate about the mission of God, we believe these days are pivotal in thanking God for all He's done in the last year and unifying around how He wants to move among us in the days to come. We're praying this year's state convention is a strategic opportunity for us to pray about how to continue reaching our communities and state with the gospel of Jesus. It's a privilege to partner together!

Sincerely,

George Wright
Senior Pastor, Shades Mountain Baptist Church



The church campus is situated at the corner of Columbiana Road and Vestaview Lane and is accessible via Highway 31 South and I65 South.

When you arrive on campus, there are a few parking spots near the west entrance to the Worship Center (Columbiana Road side of campus). This is also the best location for handicap-accessible parking.

Two larger parking lots are located to the east of the Worship Center and to the south, near the entrance to the Student Building and the Community Life Center. Access to all parking lots is via Vestaview Lane.

Covered drop-off entrances are located at the North Entrance at the Conference Center and between Giers and the Fellowship Hall.

Exhibitors and vendors for the Pastors Conference will be set up in the lobby areas outside the Worship Center. **Exhibitors and vendors for the Convention** will be set up in the Conference Center. Be sure to take time to visit these areas and meet leaders and staff from our Alabama Baptist entities and other friends.

Restrooms are located throughout the building, and all are handicap accessible.

C CONFERENCE CENTER/CONCOURSE
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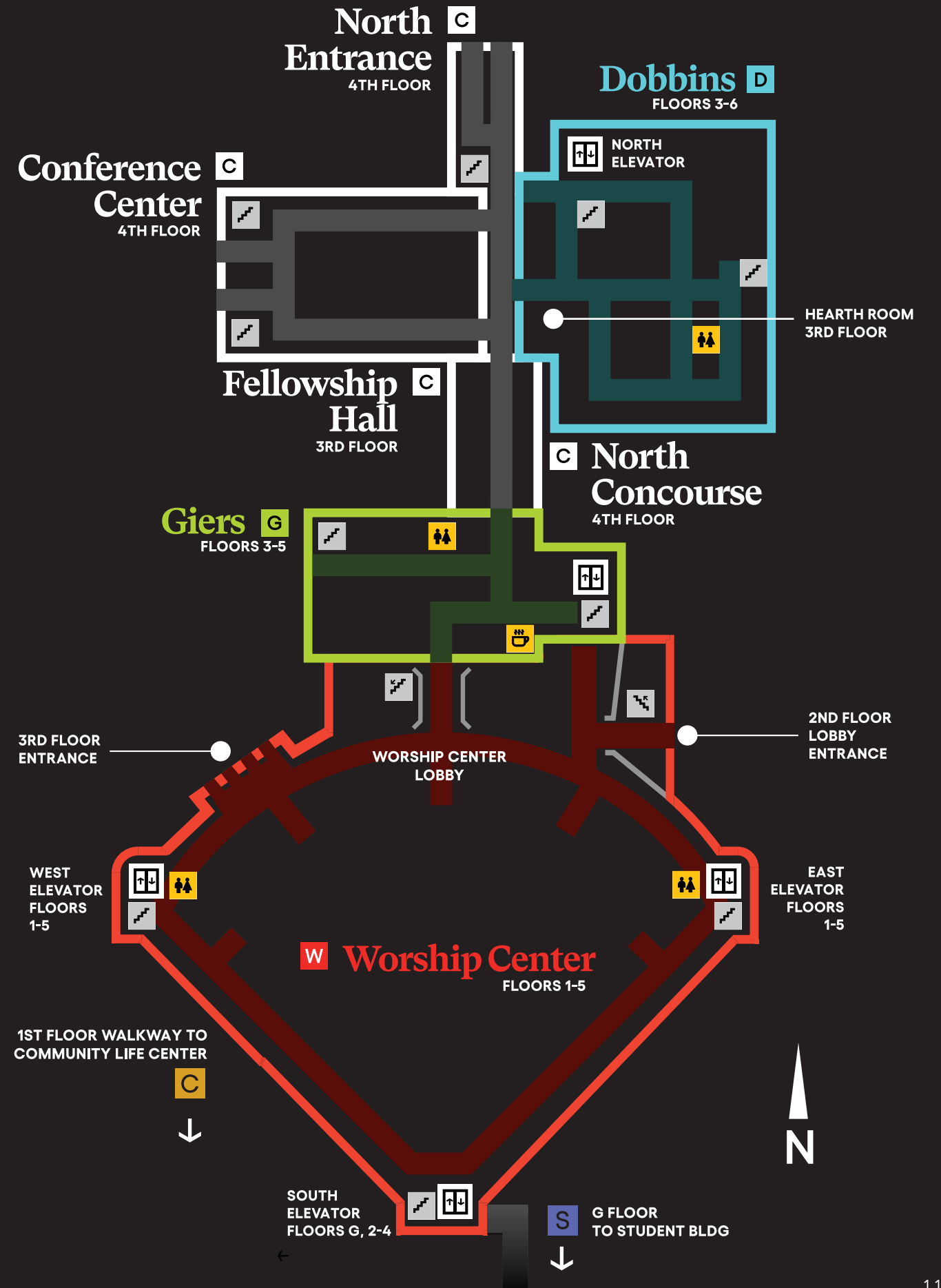
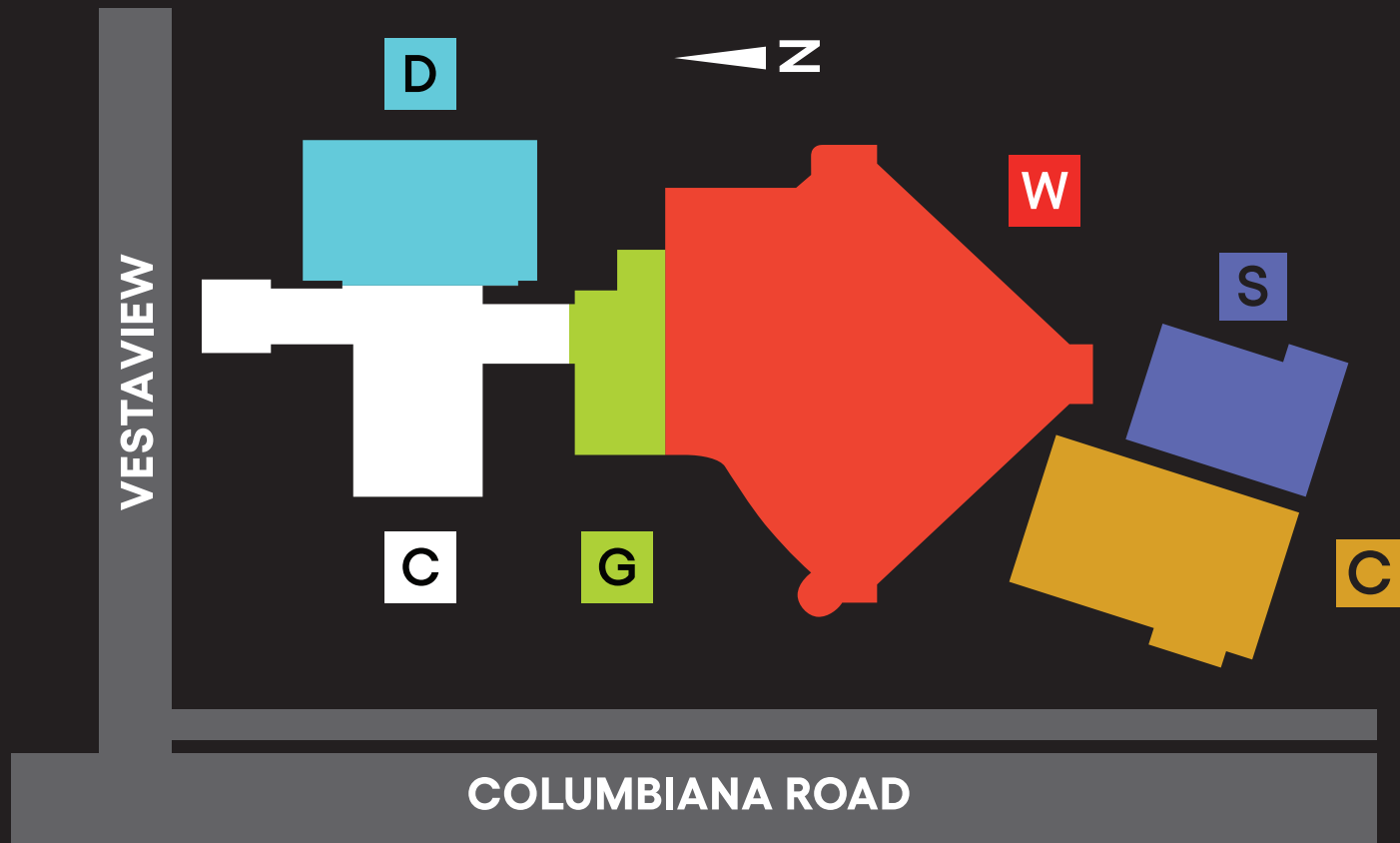
D DOBBINS BUILDING

G GIERS BUILDING

W WORSHIP CENTER

S STUDENT BUILDING

C COMMUNITY LIFE CENTER



FBC Pelham's praise and worship team leads at one of four Sharing Hope evangelism events around the state earlier this year.

God is at work

BY RICK LANCE

Executive director, Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

State Board of Missions leader reflects on the missions and ministry efforts of the past year, looks expectantly to the future

Those who know me know I'm a student of history. From it we can make observations about human behavior and in the process learn much about ourselves.

History also enables us the hindsight to see more clearly how God is at work and provides us with reasons to celebrate.

Alabama Baptists are nearing a historical milestone certainly worth celebrating.

Almost 200 years ago, on Oct. 28, 1823, 15 men and women



LANCE

met at Salem Baptist Church near Greensboro.

A historical marker at the site proclaims, "They met to promote missions, education and closer cooperation among Baptist churches in Alabama."

That meeting — the birth of the Alabama Baptist State Convention — is an occasion worth

celebrating and a moment in history worth commemorating!

That commitment to missions, education and cooperation remains at the heart of who we are and what we do. As we approach the 200th anniversary of that gathering in 2023, Alabama Baptists certainly have much to celebrate.

The theme of the 2022 State Convention Annual Meeting, Nov. 15–16 at Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, is "Celebrate," based on Psalm 100, helping to kick off a year-long anniversary observance.

Let's pause for a moment and consider what we have to cele-



A historical marker in Hale County marks the site of the first annual meeting.

Celebrate
PSALM 100

brate as Christ-followers working together in Great Commission ministries, made possible by gifts through the Cooperative Program.

We celebrate the ministry of more than 60 church planters across Alabama, including the newest Hispanic plant just started at Duncanville First Baptist.

'Yellow Shirt Army'

We celebrate the tireless efforts of our "Yellow Shirt Army" of Disaster Relief volunteers, who served this year in Kentucky following tornadoes and massive flooding, in Florida after Hurricane Ian, and in Hungary and Romania providing ministry to refugees, among other locations.

We celebrate the wonderful stories each year of salvations which occur in Vacation Bible Schools



Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers serve at Calvary Baptist Church in Arcadia, Florida, following Hurricane Ian. Teams prepared and distributed meals, and several cleanup teams also were deployed in the area.

of every size across the state, and annual events like Super Summer, Mix Music Camp and Missions Adventure Camp that are preparing tomorrow's pastors, worship leaders, deacons, Sunday School teachers and missionaries.

On Aug. 6, 50 high school and college students attended Called, an event designed to help them walk through the life-changing call to ministry.

Later that month, the Fortify gathering drew around 170 high school young men on a Saturday to consider what it means to remain faithful in an atmosphere of societal and cultural deconstruction. We don't know of any other state convention hosting such an event targeting teen guys.

Such investments in the next generation are certainly worth celebrating!

Campus ministry

Speaking of the next generation, we celebrate lives changed through Baptist Campus Ministries. Just this fall, the University

Sean McDowell issues a challenge to high school young men gathered in August for Fortify, held at FBC Trussville.

of South Alabama BCM held an event on campus where 10 students made decisions for Christ. The campus missions field includes more than 300,000 college students in Alabama.

Partnerships

We celebrate partnership missions efforts around the world, from New York to Alaska, Armenia to Uganda and many points in between, linking Alabama churches to missionaries from Alabama.



We celebrate the 10 students who professed faith in Christ and more than 20 who committed their lives to missions and ministry at the first-ever All Nations Youth Camp held at WorldSong Missions Place in Cook Springs,

which drew 100 teenagers from a variety of cultures.

In early October, around 200 international college students from 31 nations joined with 40 American students and their leaders at the International



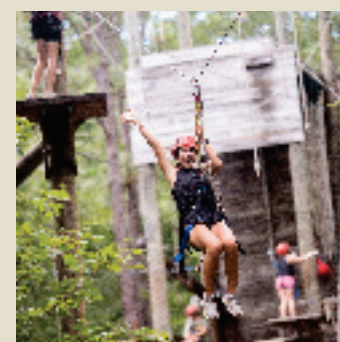
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Friends Retreat. Each year this event, also held at WorldSong, provides fertile ground for gospel conversations to take place and for our college students to get a taste of intercultural missions.

Discipleship efforts

We celebrate what's happening through the "Gospel to Everyone" initiative, an effort to reach every home in Alabama with the good news of Jesus Christ, along with the increasing number of Ala-

For more information, visit alsbom.org.

bama Baptists who are taking seriously the call to make disciples who make disciples. We celebrate equipping events like Empower and the Intentional Leader series, which are leading to improved health and revitaliza-



Around 240 international students, Alabama students and their leaders gathered at WorldSong Missions Place in Cook Springs Sept. 30–Oct. 1 for the International Friends Retreat.

tion in churches across Alabama, while also providing church leaders with the care and resources they need to be more effective.

And we celebrate so many more ministries taking place, like

literacy missions, Deaf ministry, Bible Drill, tax and financial conferences, Sunday School leader training, Children's Honor Choir, and on and on.

But at the heart of it all, we

celebrate those churches — of every shape, size and location across this state — whose members are serving the Lord faithfully both individually and collectively, reaching the lost and discipling the saved.

Generous giving

We celebrate Alabama Baptists' continued over-the-top giving through the Cooperative Program — setting the pace among all state conventions — which fuels all of the ministries mentioned here and many more.

Coupled with faithful support of the Myers-Mallory State Mis-

sions Offering, Alabama Baptists are enabling life-changing Great Commission Ministries to take root and flourish.

A story from state missionary Larry Hyche, who serves in the area of men's spiritual development, helps sum it up.

Larry said, "Last year Gary Watson (minister of youth at County Line Baptist in Enterprise) told me at Speak, our youth evangelism conference, just before I got up to preach that he brought an atheist friend with him to the conference. He was Gary's 'one' (a reference to the 'Who's Your

One?' evangelism emphasis). A couple weeks ago, Gary let me know that he helped lead that friend to the Lord!"

Much to be done

Planting seeds and celebrating harvests. That's what it's all about. Much has been accomplished, but much more is left to be done. Join us for the family reunion we call the State Convention Annual Meeting, Nov. 15–16 at Shades Mountain Baptist Church in Birmingham, as we celebrate all God has done and look forward expectantly to what He will do in the future.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM TOP GIVING AWARDS

The Office of Cooperative Program & Church Financial Resources at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions has announced the Cooperative Program giving awards for 2021:

LARGEST GIFT THROUGH THE CP



Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham,
in Birmingham Metro Baptist Association, with a total of \$1,034,986.65.
George Wright, pastor.

LARGEST AVERAGE GIFT PER RESIDENT MEMBER THROUGH THE CP

Midway Baptist Church, Midway,
in Bullock Baptist Association, which gave \$486.72 per resident member. David Stewart, pastor.

LARGEST PERCENTAGE OF UNDESIGNATED RECEIPTS GIVEN THROUGH THE CP

Mountainview Baptist Church, Cullman,
in West Cullman Baptist Association, which gave 36.7%. Dale Banks, pastor.

Data and calculations are based on actual receipts of Cooperative Program giving through the State Board of Missions, which are compared with resident membership and undesignated giving reported through the Annual Church Profile. If your Annual Church Profile was not received with these numbers included, it was not possible to calculate your church's numbers.

2023 ALABAMA DISCIPLE-MAKING CONFERENCE

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Nurturing a sense of community

BY STAFF

Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers

Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers serve, celebrate senior adults in residential setting

The last couple of years have been quite a challenge for Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers, but God continues to provide opportunities for staff and community members to care well for those who live at one of the ministry's four residential properties for seniors.

At Baptist Village in Dothan, which includes 98 apartments at Hutto Tower and 50 townhouses, many of the ministry's most popular activities were severely curtailed due to health concerns related to COVID-19.

Meeting needs

Prior to the pandemic, the facility's senior center served up to 45 meals on-site and 15 homebound meals each weekday. When all activities were put on pause in early 2020, Baptist Village staff had to rethink how to best serve elderly residents. Two volunteers stepped up to the plate, said Marie Cook, manager at Baptist Village.

Nellie Hall and Sandra Rob-

inson came to the senior center every day to prepare, bag and deliver meals to each resident on the center's list, meeting important physical and emotional needs for recipients.

Even as the pandemic subsided for most, the elderly remained a

vulnerable population, but Baptist Village staff found a way.

They held an outdoor Easter celebration in the spring, complete with bingo, hot dogs and ice cream. Nellie and Sandra were involved at every stage, assisting senior center director Michelle



Jean Lively, a resident at Baptist Village in Dothan, celebrates her 101st birthday in September 2022 with fellow residents. Unable to hold a party last year, staff members got creative to celebrate her birthday milestone.

Baptist Village resident Bonnie Riley waves to volunteers after receiving a bagged meal from the senior center. Visits from family, friends, volunteers and staff members meet important emotional, social and spiritual needs for the residents of Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers facilities around the state.



Green. Together they bagged hot dogs, helped with bingo prizes and cleaned up.

"Nellie and Sandra are a picture of a servant's heart," Green said.

The senior center recently reopened, and they are still volunteering.

"I am so grateful for their service," Cook said.

Baptist Village also celebrated a milestone birthday last September. Resident Jean Lively turned 100 on Sept. 17, 2021. Unable to host a large gathering, ABRC staff members and volunteers got creative.

"We decorated her door without her knowing it," Cook said. "We bought a cake, crown, coloring book and colored pencils, and then knocked on her door and gave her a huge surprise. She loved the door and still talks about that day!"

Like Baptist Village, ABRC's two other campuses, Knollwood in Roanoke and Eastview in Montgomery, each of which has 50 apartments for seniors, have faced many challenges in the past couple of years, Cook said.

But ABRC "will continue to



Baptist Village senior center director Michelle Green (left) and volunteer Sandra Robinson prepare to deliver bagged meals to residents. The meals are one way seniors' physical needs are met by the ministry.

minister to our residents the best that we can no matter what the circumstances are," she said, always striving to fulfill the ministry's three-fold mission to serve residents on ABRC campuses, assist churches in establishing and strengthening ministries in local retirement facilities and educate Alabama Baptists about the needs of the elderly in our state.

Visit abrc.org to learn more about Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers.



Left: Volunteer Nellie Hall helps serve lunch at the senior center at Baptist Village in Dothan. **Above:** Marie Cook (left) says the challenges of the past two years have been hard for staff and residents at ABRC facilities across the state, but the ministry does its best to serve residents "no matter what the circumstances are."



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Disaster Relief training is made possible by gifts of Alabama Baptists through the **Cooperative Program** and to the **Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering**.


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**COOPERATIVE
PROGRAM**



Equipping and encouraging

BY CANDACE MCINTOSH

Executive director, Alabama Woman's Missionary Union

Alabama WMU focuses on missions discipleship

Missions discipleship. It's the heart of Alabama Woman's Missionary Union: helping Alabama Baptists from preschoolers to senior adults live out the Great Commission in their daily lives.

Our efforts begin and end with prayer, with a continual emphasis

on teaching, giving and serving through groups led and hosted by Alabama Baptists.

Alabama WMU's missions discipleship focus includes several powerful ministries.

We are beginning our fifth year of praying daily for the people of South Asia. That is 1,460 days of praying daily for various people

groups and for those who share the gospel with them. This past year, we know of 33 salvations directly related to our prayers.

There are amazing testimonies coming out of a predominantly Muslim country in this region!

We hosted Missionary Kids from across the world at World-Song Missions Place in Cook Springs in August for the annual MK Reentry Retreat. More than 50 MKs participated and were prepared spiritually and emotionally for the transition back to life in the U.S. and for college life.

Blessings

In April, we hosted parents of international missionaries at WorldSong for a special time of prayer, worship and fellowship.

Ministries to ministers' wives, Alabama schools, children in crisis and families in the Mississippi Delta have helped provide material, emotional and spiritual support in a variety of ways.

The past year has been full of blessings as Alabama Baptists have shown their heart for the Great Commission and the Great Commandment by giving

WMU members from First Baptist Church Montgomery exemplify the value of intergenerational missions groups in the local church.

generously to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

The coming year promises more opportunities to pray, give and serve.



McINTOSH

"Mission: West Africa" kicked off at our annual Connect conference in July. The initiative has two focal areas.

The first is Ajami Script, an effort to open doors to the gospel by getting God's word written in the heart language of a people



group with more than 20 million members.

The second is support for the Shield Foundation, which helps families and children with special

needs in a West African city where millions live and work.

"Mission: West Africa" seeks prayer warriors who will pray for those learning to teach Scripture



National WMU President Connie Dixon (center) shares in the fun at Alabama WMU's annual Connect conference. "Mission: West Africa," a new missions emphasis for Alabama WMU, was introduced at the conference.

EVERY CLASSROOM A GREAT COMMISSION CLASSROOM

We exist to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ by equipping students to serve the Church and fulfill the Great Commission. Jesus has commanded us to be on mission — to join his mission. That is why everything we do — from the classroom to campus life — is in service of the Great Commission.



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Baptist Theological Seminary

Alabama WMU Executive Director Candace McIntosh (left) catches up with Bethany Li (center) and Isabella Kennedy, former Acteens taught by McIntosh. Acteens is WMU's missions discipleship group for teen girls.



for the first time or for children served by the Shield Foundation School.

Service opportunity

Those trained in occupational or speech therapy, or perhaps in other facets of special needs education, may find an avenue for missions service through the

Shield Foundation. Details on these opportunities are available at alabamawmu.org/mwa.

As we look forward with excitement to 2023 and these new initiatives, we also will continue to share the love of Christ through state and national WMU ministries like Baptist Nursing Fellowship, Christian Job Corps,

Christmas Backpacks and temporary child care through Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief.

We also will continue to encourage and equip leaders at the local church level who are in turn encouraging and equipping preschoolers, children, students and adults to pray, to give and to go in obedience to the missionary call of Jesus.

You can connect with us via our website at alabamawmu.org, where you can read more about all our ministries and learn how to get involved. You also can reach us by telephone at 334-613-2226. One of our staff members will be happy to help you find what you need.

For more information, visit AlabamaWMU.org.



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TBFA board member Alan Taylor (left) and TBFA staff members (l to r) John Ashworth, Allison Combs and Joey Hocutt stand ready to help churches steward their resources well.



For more information, visit tbfa.org.

Making a Kingdom impact

BY JOHN ASHWORTH
President, The Baptist Foundation of Alabama

Two new faces at The Baptist Foundation of Alabama help Alabama Baptist churches thrive financially

As Alabama Baptists, we all want to be a part of a healthy church making a bigger Kingdom impact. But too often, churches can feel limited — like they can't do all

the ministry the Lord is calling them to do. Even the healthiest churches are always looking for more ways to multiply their Kingdom impact.

This is where The Baptist Foun-

dation of Alabama comes in.

We help Alabama Baptist churches thrive financially so they can unlock more financial resources to do more ministry work across the state and around the world.

In 2022, the Foundation added two new staff members to help us achieve this purpose.

In January, we welcomed Allison Combs to our team as the director of ministry relations. Allison's role is new for our ministry, created to cultivate better relationships with new and existing ministry supporters (individuals) and ministry partners (churches or other ministries).

Having worked in ministry and in the nonprofit and corporate sectors, Allison uses her personal and professional experience to build relationships with the clients we serve. As part of our ministry engagement area, Allison's goal is to express the Foundation's gratitude to clients, help meet their long-term service needs and be a passionate advocate for our overall ministry.

"I get to hear the stories of how the Lord has connected so many to TBFA and thank them for allowing us to be a small part of God's big plan in their lives," Allison said. "What a privilege!"

'Hidden jewel'

Tommy Treadwell joined TBFA in May as our chief legal and administrative officer. Seminary trained, Tommy comes to us from the corporate world, where he has served as general counsel for several large companies.

Stepping into the role previously held by our president, he is already an asset to our ministry, not only in our day-to-day operations but also in various legal matters. Skilled in administration and the practice of law, Tommy will take a leadership role in the administration of client accounts, the annual scholarship

process, investments and several other parts of TBFA's ministry.

"In my few months at the Foundation, I have enjoyed learning more about the amazing ways the Foundation can help Alabama Baptists," Treadwell said. "I have been a very involved Alabama Baptist most of my life, but I was unaware of the tremendous ministry resource the Foundation is. It is truly a hidden jewel that more churches and individuals need to uncover. While learning more about estate planning and charitable giving options for individuals has been fascinating, most interesting to me has been Kingdom-impact investing, which enables multiplication of ministry resources by investing in companies that are making a positive Kingdom impact."

The TBFA team has welcomed Allison and Tommy. They are tremendous additions to our team

as we help Alabama Baptist churches and individuals thrive financially, and we are excited to see how the Lord will use them to minister to Alabama Baptists.

Through services like Christian estate planning, investments, church loans, online giving, capital campaign consulting, scholarships and more, the Foundation helps churches unlock more financial resources to do more ministry work across the state and around the world.



ASHWORTH

To learn more about our team and how The Baptist Foundation of Alabama can help your church thrive financially, please call us at 334-394-2000 or visit our website, tbfa.org.



Tommy Treadwell (left) recently joined TBFA as chief legal and administrative officer. He serves alongside TBFA President John Ashworth (center) and director of ministry engagement Rodney Bledsoe.

Alabama Baptist State Convention

NOVEMBER 15-16, 2022 | SHADES MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH IN VESTAVIA HILLS | THEME: CELEBRATE | SCRIPTURE: PSALM 100

schedule

TUESDAY MORNING

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leader	Jeff Stith
8:30	Pre-session Music	Alabama Singing Men & Women
8:35	Prayer.....	Nic Seaborn
8:40	Call to Order	Buddy Champion
	GREETINGS	
	Birmingham Metro Baptist Association.....	Chris Crain
	Shades Mountain Baptist Church.....	George Wright
	Congregational Music.....	Jeff Stith
8:50	Enrollment of Messengers	Billie Davis
8:55	Committee on Order of Business	Chip Starnes
9:00	Committee Appointments.....	Buddy Champion
9:05	Memorial Service	Clarke Skelton
9:15	Introduction of Resolutions	Roger Willmore
9:20	Special Music	Alabama Singing Men & Women
9:25	Celebrating What God Has Done	
	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
9:50	Committee on Committees	Daniel Atkins
10:00	Committee on Boards and Commissions.....	Craig Carlisle
	RECOGNITIONS	
10:10	Recognition of Former Convention Presidents.....	Rick Lance
10:20	Recognition of New Pastors and New Church Staff Members.....	Mike Jackson
10:25	Cooperative Program Recognitions	Rick Lance
	CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH OUR ENTITIES	
10:35	The Alabama Baptist, Jennifer Davis Rash; Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, Lonette Berg; The Baptist Foundation of Alabama, John Ashworth; Alabama Citizens Action Program, Greg Davis; Christian Life Commission, Bill Morgan	
11:05	Miscellaneous Business	
11:10	Presentation of Convention President.....	Rick Lance
11:15	Special Music	The Grand Staff
11:20	President's Address	Buddy Champion
11:50	Benediction	Brian Burdette

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leader	David Inestroza
	WORSHIP	
1:30	Congregational Music.....	David Inestroza
1:40	Prayer.....	Stuart Davidson
	CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH THE STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS	
1:45	Report of Executive Director.....	Rick Lance

2:00	State Board of Missions Recommendations and Convention Recognitions	
2:35	Report of Sexual Abuse Task Force	Craig Carlisle
2:45	Celebrating What God is Doing in Baptist Life	Willie McLaurin
	CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH OUR ENTITIES	
3:10	Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries, Rod Marshall; Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center, Russell Klinner; Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers, Marie Cook; Alabama Woman's Missionary Union, Candace McIntosh	
3:40	Miscellaneous Business	
	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
3:45	Resolutions Committee	Roger Willmore
4:00	Committee on Time, Place and Preacher	John Thweatt
4:05	Audit and Insurance Committees.....	Mike Jackson
4:10	Benediction	Tim Henning

TUESDAY EVENING

6:30	Presession Music.....	Michael Adler
6:40	Missions Recognitions.....	Rick Lance
6:45	Church Planting Recognitions	Rick Barnhart
6:50	Music Worship	
7:20	Prayer and Introduction of Speaker	Rick Lance
	Celebrating What God Is Doing Through His People.....	Robert Smith, Jr.

WEDNESDAY MORNING

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leader	Jonathan Rogers
	Worship	
8:30	Congregational Music.....	Jonathan Rogers
8:35	Prayer.....	Lee Tate
8:40	Celebrating What God Can Do in the Future	
9:05	Election of Officers	
9:15	Previously Scheduled Business	
9:45	Resolutions Committee Report.....	Roger Willmore
	CELEBRATING WHAT GOD IS DOING THROUGH OUR ENTITIES	
10:00	Samford University, Beck Taylor; University of Mobile, Lonnie Burnett; Education Commission, Harrell Cushing; Board of Aid to Students in Church-Related Vocations, Randy Johnson	
10:30	Election of Officers	
10:40	Congregational Music.....	Mary Thomas Queen
10:45	Introduction of Convention Preacher and Alternate Preacher	Buddy Champion
	Special Music	Wason Carroll
	Scripture	Jarman Leatherwood
10:55	Convention Sermon	Joel Carwile
11:25	Introduction of Convention Officers.....	Rick Lance
11:30	Benediction and Adjournment.....	Rosevelt Morris

A sacred trust

BY LONNIE BURNETT
President, University of Mobile

University of Mobile on mission to 'prove faithful'

As the only higher education entity in the Alabama Baptist State Convention, the University of Mobile has a great opportunity but also a sobering responsibility.

Recently, in my silent moments, I have been pondering the latter. I am drawn to the Apostle Paul who, in 1 Corinthians 4:2, wrote: "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

As president of the University

of Mobile, it is my responsibility to ensure that we are both faithful and fruitful.

The Baptists of our great state have indeed placed an awesome trust in the University of Mobile. Our many and diverse congregations have tangibly backed up that trust in several ways.

Sacrificial giving

First, they faithfully support us by their sacrificial giving through the Cooperative Program. Secondly, they send us students. Finally, and most importantly, they con-

tinuously lift us up in their prayers.

It is this unwavering support for and faith in our university that demands our attention to their trust.

Over 50 years ago, in one of the first state convention brochures promoting what was then Mobile College, an anonymous writer stated that the institution was "the creation of a people of Christian vision."

The author went on to say that the mission of the college was for its students to "find maximum understanding of the reality of God and the Christian way of life." The



BURNETT

founders of this institution trusted that we would fulfill that lofty goal.

In 2022, that goal, and the trust behind it, is more

important than ever. Our nation is struggling with moral, economic, political and spiritual issues.

Now more than ever, we need the type of young men and women that the University of Mobile produces. This product is not possible without that trust and stewardship relationship.

No. 1 small college, No. 1 dorms

Our students say life is better at the University of Mobile, and the popular ranking site Niche agrees, naming UM the No. 1 Best Small College in Alabama with the No. 1 Best College Dorms in the state — and the No. 17 Best Dorms in America.

The site combines student reviews with data to rate everything from college food to campus life. The 2023 rankings gave UM a grade of

"A" for UM's campus, student life, safety, food and dorms.

UM also earned honors from U.S. News & World Report, moving up from the regional college category to regional university.

UM was again named a Best Value School and was ranked among Best Regional Universities in the South and Best Regional Universities in the South for Veterans.

Keep up with the latest UM news at umobile.edu/news.

For more
information,
visit umobile.edu.



KNOW & BE KNOWN



"I really like working at a university that represents my Christian beliefs. I think the students are wonderful; they are kind, considerate and fun to work with. I love seeing students, especially in the higher education courses, find something they love and pursue it wholeheartedly."

DR. JOYCE WOODBURN
Associate Professor of Education
School of Education
University of Mobile



"I have learned so much about leadership through the Master of Business Administration program. I have been able to take what I have learned with me into my internships, and I cannot wait to take that information beyond the classroom and into the workplace."

JABRAUN BASS
Senior
Master of Business Administration



The University of Mobile was the starting point for Dr. Tony Weaver's medical career, where he earned an Associate Degree in Nursing. Today, he is the first and only Native American in the nation to become a plastic and reconstructive surgeon.

TONY WEAVER, DO
Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon
Huntsville Hospital
UM Class of 2006
Associate Degree in Nursing

UM's new College Woods Center opens

UM's new College Woods Center opened in August 2022. In addition to serving as a venue for university performances and events, the space is ideal for hosting church and community banquets and events, corporate meetings and conferences.

College Woods Center includes:

- **College Woods Auditorium** — A 400-seat auditorium with a stage features state-of-the-art lighting and sound. The auditorium may also be arranged to accommodate banquet seating for over 200.

- **Central Meeting Room** — A large meeting room offers seating for up to 150, or banquet seating for 120.

- **Breakout Rooms** — Smaller rooms provide space for breakout sessions or small group meeting spaces.

- **Catering services available.**

The university initially purchased the former College Park Baptist Church facility adjacent to campus in 2012. The 28,400-square-foot building with 13 acres was leased for a while, but

in May 2022, the university began major renovations.

For more information on the College Woods Center, visit umobile.edu/cwc. To book a space, call 251-442-2201.



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‘God’s presence’

— BY RUSSELL KLINNER —
Executive director, Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center

Shocco Springs will celebrate 75 years of camp and conference ministry in 2023

When guests visit Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center, they experience more than they expect. It’s common for us to hear comments like, “I felt such peace from the moment I arrived,” or “God’s presence surrounded me here.” For 75 years, God has used

Shocco Springs as a place of restoration, inspiration and connection for His people.

Restoration

In late summer 2021, a fire destroyed our laundry building, including all our washers and dryers and almost our entire inventory of bedding and linens.

But God restored! Due to God’s provision through our insurance and the generous donations of friends of Shocco, we started the summer of 2022 with a brand new, modernized laundry facility, complete with all new equipment and linens.

We were reminded of Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things

“Disciple making is key to Christian ministry and to the Christian life. That’s why I’m thankful Kevin Blackwell and Randy Norris have given us *Cultivate Disciplemaking*.”

Dr. Jason Allen, President
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

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work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose.”

Inspiration

Since the first conference held in 1948, God has inspired the visionary leadership at Shocco to minister to guests in innovative ways.

In an effort to reach children in our local community who might not have an opportunity to experience camp, in June we held our second year of Shocco Day Camp, completely programmed and hosted by Shocco Springs.

This year we expanded to two weeks, allowing more than 130 children ages 5 to 13 a traditional camp experience, complete with worship, Bible study, swimming, arts and crafts, high ropes and group games.

Through our scholarship program, several children were able to attend at no charge.

Connection

We want our guests to enjoy a comfortable, natural, distraction-free place where they can

For more information, visit shocco.org.



Campers pose for the traditional welcome sign photo during Shocco Day Camp 2022. More than 130 local children ages 5 to 13 participated.

connect with the Lord and with each other. We recognize the need to continuously update our campus in order to meet the needs of our guests.

This year we remodeled the second floor of Bagley Center. The furniture and slatted walls around the common area have been replaced with contemporary furniture and railings in a design similar to the renovated first floor.

These renovations allow a more efficient dining queue, which helps with long lines. A new HVAC system replaced the older one that had been in use for well over 40 years.

The road to our Adventure Camp area has been repaved, and we have added a new field space



KLINNER

The newly renovated second floor of Bagley Center includes updated furnishings and a more efficient queue for the Shocco dining hall.

that will be more convenient for guests staying in our Ridge lodges.

Next fall Shocco will celebrate 75 years of camp and conference ministry. We will host an event for Shocco alumni and supporters. Plans will be announced by early 2023.

We are so thankful to the Lord for His faithfulness in allowing Shocco's ministry to continue to bless tens of thousands of people each year.

As always, Shocco staff and trustees appreciate Alabama Baptists using our facilities, praying for us and contributing their time, talents and financial gifts, especially those made through the Cooperative Program.

May God be glorified and honored through lives He continues to change on the Shocco campus.

To find out more about how you can schedule a campus tour or experience Shocco as a guest, visit our website at shocco.org or call 256-761-1100.

Baptist Campus Ministries YOUR CAMPUS CONNECTION bcmlink.org

Baptist Campus Ministries is a student organization on college and university campuses, a ministry of local Baptist churches, and a great way to make sure your students **CONNECT**.

These state missionaries serve on college and university campuses around our state through Baptist Campus Ministries. Please visit bcmlink.org/bcm to learn how we can help make sure your students get connected to a campus minister and BCM on their campus.



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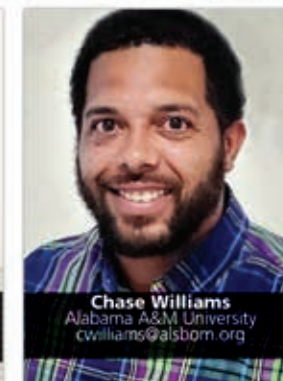
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ALCAP President and CEO Greg Davis urges members of the Alabama Legislature's Economic Development and Tourism Committee to reject a lottery bill introduced during the 2022 legislative session.



Priorities

AN INTERVIEW WITH GREG DAVIS
President, Alabama Citizens Action Program

Alabama Citizens Action Program serves as a vital link between people in the pews and state legislators

As host of the daily live radio broadcast and podcast Priority Talk, Greg Davis shares good news and Christian values. Davis has a similar mission as president and CEO of Alabama Citizens Action Program.

Q: Just over one year ago, the announcement was made that you would be joining ALCAP after 25

years of leading the campus ministry First Priority of Alabama. How has the transition gone since that time?

A: It's hard to believe it's been a year already. It has definitely been a year of transition for myself and for the ministry. I am grateful that former ALCAP president and CEO Joe Godfrey spent seven months with me as I learned the

landscape at the Statehouse in Montgomery. His help and guidance put me way ahead of where I would have been otherwise.

Q: What have you most enjoyed about your new role? What have you learned that surprised you?

A: The most enjoyable part has been getting to know leaders from

across the state — legislators, as well as pastors and association leaders. I really enjoy the relationships.

I learned from the legislators that they value the church's influence in Alabama communities. Unfortunately, many told me they don't hear from pastors or church members in their districts very often. My impression is they wish church members and leaders were more engaged in the legislative process.

Q: What can Alabama Baptists expect from ALCAP in 2023?

A: We hope to improve communication with churches so people in the pews know more about the issues facing our state and how they can have a voice.

There is tremendous support

to restart the annual tradition of the Statehouse prayer breakfast, which ceased because of the



DAVIS

traveling the state preaching, meeting, speaking and building relationships with as many people as possible.

Q: Is there anything else Alabama Baptists need to know about ALCAP?

A: One thing I would emphasize is that the ministry of ALCAP

pandemic. It's a ministry outlet many people in Montgomery highly value, and we hope to hold the event again in 2023. And throughout the year, I'll be

needs the financial support of our churches. We are grateful to be an auxiliary of the Alabama Baptist State Convention. Cooperative Program support provides a strong foundation of funding. But those gifts alone are not enough to accomplish all that I know God desires of us.

ALCAP exists thanks to the gifts of Alabama Baptists and others who are concerned about the moral issues facing our state. I hope Alabama Baptists will continue to make support for ALCAP a high priority in the years and decades to come.

For more information about ALCAP and American Character Builders, go to alcap.com.

For more information, visit alcap.com.

PRIORITY TALK LIVE

hosted by ALCAP President and CEO Greg Davis

Good News & Christian Values
Listen weeknights 5-7 PM
or anytime to our podcast

WXJC Radio 101.1 FM & 850 AM



PriorityTalkRadio.com

Priority Talk is your daily source for what's happening in politics, ministry, church and family in the state of Alabama and beyond.



Giving foster kids a voice

BY ROD MARSHALL

President, Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries

Children's Homes speaks love into the lives of the most vulnerable

When Tyler* first came into care in Bobby and Kylie Mikel's home, he entered kicking and screaming. With-

in minutes of being in their home, he punched Kylie in the face.

The Mikels learned very quickly that Tyler didn't know how to talk. At almost 3 years old, he couldn't

say basic words. Tyler couldn't even say his name.

Having no other way to express his thoughts or emotions, Tyler would yell, grunt, spit and kick to



At almost three years old, Tyler* didn't know how to speak when he entered foster care. Because of you, he received the support he needed to learn how to speak. Now, he's a chatty and thriving 4 year old.

“

“AS A PASTOR OR CHURCH LEADER, YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN LIKE TYLER. THERE ARE THREE PRIMARY WAYS TO SUPPORT ABCH — PRAY, SERVE OR GIVE. VISIT ALABAMACHILD.ORG/CHURCHES TO LEARN WAYS YOU AND YOUR CHURCH CAN MAKE A LIFELONG IMPACT IN THE LIVES OF FOSTER KIDS.”

ROD MARSHALL

get what he needed. Aggression was the only way Tyler knew how to communicate.

“At first, my husband and I wondered what had we gotten ourselves into,” said Kylie. “I mean, it was an adjustment. ... It was really rough. On the one hand, I just felt so bad for him because it's not his fault, and he was just so upset. On the other hand, the human side of me is like, man, I can get punched only so many times.”

Your support matters

The support of Alabama Baptists provided the Mikels with ABCH social workers who walked alongside them during the hard times. They also helped get Tyler into speech therapy.

Over the past year, Tyler has worked very hard in speech therapy. The Mikels also helped him at home to develop his language, communication and healthy behavior skills.

In June, Tyler graduated from speech therapy. He very rarely has violent outbursts now because he can communicate when something upsets him and talk about how he is feeling. He knows and can spell his own name. At 4 years old, he now knows the alphabet and shapes. He can sign the entire

alphabet, read and write, and have full conversations.

“People that know him now would've never thought [he was once an aggressive kid] because he's so sweet,” said Kylie. “He's a whole different kid. He has the sweetest heart. He is sweet, helpful to others and kindhearted. He remembers everybody's names.”

The Mikels are now in the process of adopting Tyler and his younger sister.

“It's just amazing to see how God works and what He can do through brokenness,” said Kylie. “You see how God takes broken things and puts them back together in different ways. There's just nothing like it, even during the hardships [of fostering]. Even when it seems scary.”

For more information, visit alabamachild.org.

Tyler is just one of the roughly 6,000 children in foster care in Alabama, yet there are only 2,500 licensed foster homes in the state.

Rod Marshall, president of Alabama Baptist Children's Homes, notes that ABCH is the largest faith-based foster care provider in the state.

However, every day ABCH sees more and more kids finding their way into the foster care system in need of loving and safe homes.

There is a desperate need for families willing to open their homes to these hurting children until they can return home, be placed with a relative or be adopted.

Marshall believes that if all 3,000+ Alabama

Baptist churches were to come together and collectively advocate for these hurting children, we could solve the foster care crisis in our state.

Make a difference

As a pastor or church leader, you can make a difference in the lives of children like Tyler. There are three primary ways to support ABCH — pray, serve or give.

Visit alabamachild.org/churches to learn ways you and your church can make a lifelong impact in the lives of foster children.

*Name and photo (page 40) have been changed to protect identity.



MARSHALL

MINISTRYSAFE Workshops Coming TO ALABAMA!

**MINISTRYSAFE CHILD SAFETY WORKSHOP
WITH GREG LOVE AND KIMBERLEE NORRIS**

**SAVE THE
DATE!**

February 23, 2023 (LOCATIONS
March 23, 2023 TBA)

Topics include awareness, safety system, tools needed, effective screening process, high-risk indicators and ministering to victims. Cost of \$20 includes training, materials and lunch.

**Visit alsbom.org/ministrysafe for updated
information and to register.**

Special offer for Alabama Baptist churches: Access the entire MinistrySafe Safety System, a \$250 value, for only \$50 for the first year. Visit ministrysafe.com/alsbom for details.



Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS

*This event is made possible by gifts of Alabama Baptists
through the Cooperative Program.*

GuideStone®

Church websites

BY GRACE THORNTON
The Alabama Baptist

Rockford Baptist pastor testifies to benefits of Hosted Church

Jeff Fuller, pastor of Rockford Baptist Church, said his church didn't have a website before they tried Hosted Church, but using the service provided by TAB Media Group has been "a good experience for us."

James Hammack, digital services manager for TAB Media, personalized Rockford Baptist's website with the colors, information and images they chose and updated the site as needed — all part of the services offered by Hosted Church.

Fuller also got Hammack to teach him how to update the site himself, so now he can handle

weekly changes on his own.

"I'm able to go in and edit whatever I need to," Fuller related.

"It has been very easy to work with, very easy to manipulate."

"James has been great. He has shared his expertise with me and helped me put things together."

Fuller said he appreciates the relationship and is grateful Hosted Church is run by TAB Media.

"I'm glad we do it through TAB Media because I can trust it. I know that it's secure, protected and everything," he noted, adding the church website now offers an online giving option.

A low annual cost covers Hosted Church services plus the purchase of a domain name. The package also offers regular security scans and backups to keep data safe.

For more
information, visit
hostedchurch.com.

Revive

FREE ADMISSION

Senior Adult Evangelism Conference

Monday, May 8, 9 a.m.-Noon, First Baptist Church, Birmingham

SPEAKERS
Kevin Hamm



J.J. Washington



SPECIAL MUSIC
Karen Peck and
New River

evangelizeAL.org/revive





John G. “Jack” Green records stories from his service during World War II and as a pastor during the civil rights movement. Green’s stories were preserved through the Oral History Ministry of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission.

tion Crossroads, the atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll. On the day of the first test, Jack stood on the deck of the flagship between high-



BERG

ranking military officials, tasked with watching the explosion of the first test bomb, “Able,” through an instrument. Not long after, Jack became very ill, quite possibly due to radiation poisoning.

Following his military service, Jack returned to Birmingham, where he felt the call to preach. He went to Howard College (now Samford University) to prepare for ministry and graduated in 1950.

He served as pastor of several Alabama Baptist churches, including Camden Baptist Church in Wilcox

County during the U.S. civil rights movement. As violence boiled over in nearby Selma, Jack met several times with Martin Luther King Jr. in an effort to calm tensions.

He also served as a chaplain with the National Guard and was called to active duty during the Korean conflict. Through his service, he had an opportunity to preach to privates and generals alike.

Answering God’s call

In 1980, Jack and his wife, Mary Edna, accepted an assignment with the International Mission Board in Seoul, South Korea, where Jack pastored Seoul International Baptist Church for 12 years.

The church saw great growth because the Korean people who came to know Christ wanted to be like the missionaries. They shared their Savior with friends and family

and invited many to church.

The Greens retired from the missions field and returned to Alabama, where Jack served as interim pastor at eight churches. He has written two books and is in the process of writing a third.

After 96 years of life, Jack said there’s an important truth he wants people to know.

“Once you ask the Father to guide you in your decisions, He will answer,” Jack said. “You no

longer have to worry. Accept what He reveals to you, even though it may not be

what you want. Wait on the Lord.”

The Alabama Baptist Historical Commission is here to help preserve your faith story.

Contact us at 205-726-2363.

For more information, visit abhonline.com.

What’s in a life?

BY LONETTE BERG

Executive director, Alabama Baptist Historical Commission

Alabama Baptist Historical Commission preserves personal stories and spiritual legacies

One of the great joys of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission is to hear the stories of Alabama Baptists and what God has done in and through their lives. Through our Oral History Ministry, we provide guidance in preserving faith stories — stories like that of Jack Green.

John G. “Jack” Green, 96, has been living with joy, serving the

Lord and sharing the gospel since he gave his life to Christ at age 12.

Jack grew up in the Avondale area of Birmingham as the youngest of four children. Money was tight in his household, and Jack sold candy at the courthouse to help with expenses.

A judge took an interest in the young entrepreneur and asked him to assist in the courtroom. Jack became interested in court reporting,

so he took classes in shorthand and typing.

Too young to join the military, at 17 he got a job as stenographer for the instrumentation engineer at Clinton Engineer Works in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the top-secret site where scientists were developing the first atomic bomb.

Jack soon joined the U.S. Army Air Corps and wound up as aide to the general who oversaw Opera-

ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL COMMISSION

“Unveiling the past to enlighten the present and illumine the future.”



PRESERVING



SHARING



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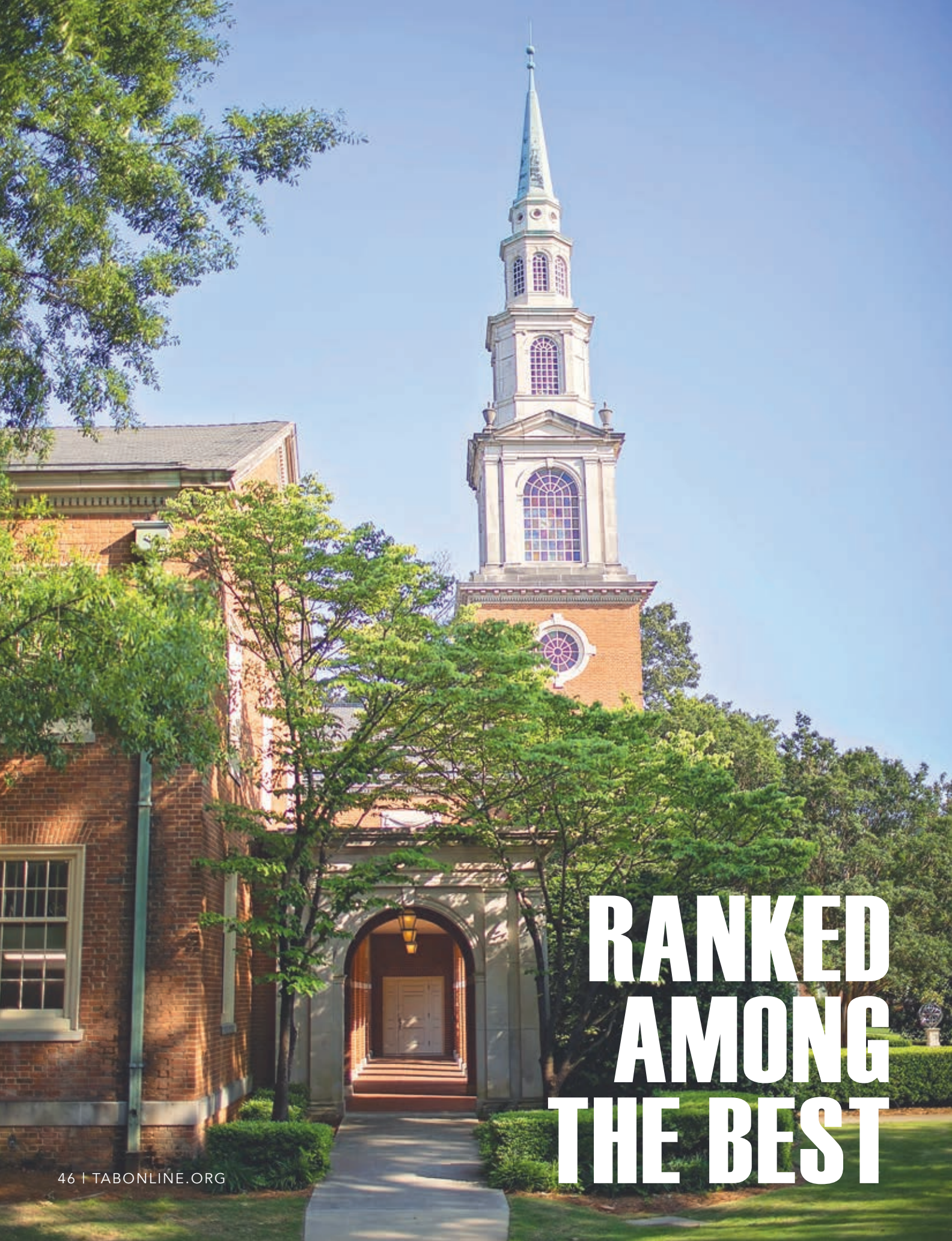
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Growing national reputation

BY HOLLY GAINER
Director of communication, Samford University

Samford University receives largest gift in school history, begins major capital project focused on wellness

Samford University ranks among the nation’s leading Christian universities. In May, Samford received a transformational \$100 million gift — the largest gift made to the university by a single donor and the largest gift ever made to a higher education institution in the state of Alabama by a single donor.

Funding for the generous donation comes from the estate of Marvin Mann (’54), who died March 19.

According to Mann’s wishes, \$95 million will go toward endowed student scholarships, and \$5 million will go to support the Frances Marlin Mann Center for Ethics and Leadership, established by Mann in 2008 in honor of his late wife, Frances.

In June, the university announced plans to enlarge and renovate existing buildings to create a new state-of-the-art recreation and athletic complex.

This historic project will create a world-class campus complex providing students and employees with expanded opportunities

to improve mental wellness and physical fitness, as well as new spaces for campus events and student gatherings.

Additional facilities will provide new practice and training spaces for the university’s 17 Division I athletic teams.

The new complex is part of a

comprehensive plan for expanded student recreation, health and wellness. The \$65 million venture is the largest capital project in the university’s history.

Samford’s growing national reputation continues to be recognized by rankings from The Wall Street Journal and U.S. News &

Samford University President Beck Taylor chats with students on campus between classes.



World Report, highlighting the university's commitment to academic rigor, student success and value.

In its 2022 ranking of higher education institutions, The Wall



TAYLOR

Street Journal and Times Higher Education recognized Samford as first in the nation for student engagement. Samford also ranks 184th overall among the nearly 800 universities in the national ranking, and first in Alabama, a position held every year since the rankings' inception in 2016.

Samford was recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the best universities in the nation for undergraduate teaching.

It ranks the university 66th in the country on its Best Undergraduate Teaching list, the only university in Alabama to make this list.

Considering there are over 3,900 degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the U.S. recognized by the Department of Education, this ranking places Samford among the top 2% of colleges and universities in the country.

Best value

Samford also continues to be ranked as the best value for a college education in Alabama. In the list of national universities included in the best value ranking, Samford is ranked 104th, placing it among the top universities in the country.

Samford is ranked 34th in the nation among private universities and 115th among all public,

private and liberal arts colleges and universities analyzed for Kiplinger's Personal Finance's Best College Values list (2019).

Cumulatively, these recent rankings affirm Samford's growing national reputation as one of the leading Christian universities in the United States today.

In 2022, Samford announced the largest freshman class in the history of the institution with 972 enrolled first-year students. The total enrollment, which includes undergraduate and graduate students, is 5,683 students, with 3,672 undergraduate students and 2,011 graduate students. The students represent 47 states, Puerto Rico, Guam and 19 countries.

For more information, visit samford.edu.



Let's make a difference in the lives of hurting people in **Montgomery!**

March 10-11, volunteers just like you will care for hurting communities in **Montgomery and the River Region** by serving local churches, bivocational pastors, low-income schools and other organizations in need of assistance. Projects may include some light construction, painting and landscaping, hosting sports camps or block parties.

By partnering with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and the three River Region Baptist associations, Send Relief is making it easy for you and your team to have a real, lasting impact in the lives of the River Region's most vulnerable.



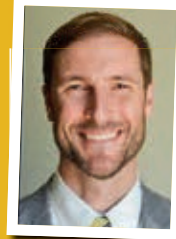
Register your team now at alsbom.org/servetour23
for early access to free resources like prayer guides, online trainings and more!
Participant registration opens January 22.





Willie McLaurin
Interim President
and CEO,
Executive
Committee of the
Southern Baptist
Convention

**FREE
ADMISSION**



Ben Stubblefield
Pastor, Spring Hill
Baptist Church,
Mobile

2023 State Evangelism Conference

January 29-30, 2023

Sunday - 5:30 pm, Monday - 8:30 am

Lakeside Baptist Church, Birmingham

Free lunch with Mark Clifton on Monday.



An annual statewide event for encouraging and equipping pastors and churches in the work of evangelism. **FREE ADMISSION**, no registration. *Ministers' Wives gathering on Monday morning.*



Mark Clifton
Senior Director of
Replanting,
North American
Mission Board



Fred Luter
Pastor, Franklin
Avenue Baptist
Church, New
Orleans



Mac Brunson
Pastor, Valleydale
Church, Birmingham

evangelizeAL.org/SEC



**Alabama Baptist
STATE BOARD OF MISSIONS**

This event is made possible by gifts of Alaba-
through the Cooperative Program.

Thank you

Several years ago, I created a border near our back deck by moving some plants from another part of the yard. When the border foliage faded in the heat of summer, I thought my efforts had been in vain.

Imagine my surprise a few weeks later when, almost overnight, a mass of bright red flowers appeared along the border. I learned from a neighbor that what I had mistaken for another plant was actually what most call “surprise” lilies.



Another common name for these simple yet beautiful flowers is resurrection lilies, and it's easy to see why both names are used.

As fall returns each year, I eagerly anticipate these flowers, their stems shooting up from bare ground and exploding into a ball of delicate blossoms — brilliant life springing from what appears to have died.

Nature is filled with reminders of God's miraculous gifts of spiritual rebirth and new life in Christ. Our annual issue of Fruitful is a reminder of life as well — the vibrant life of Alabama Baptists serving in so many ways through more than 3,000 congregations.

The pages of Fruitful 2022 tell the story of ministry and missions by and for Alabama Baptists and the generous giving that supports the work. The scope of all that gets done never ceases to amaze me, and I hope that as you turned each page, you too have been surprised again how God uses our meager efforts for His glory.

Carrie

Carrie Brown McWhorter
Content editor

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‘It was a God thing’

— BY GRACE THORNTON —
The Alabama Baptist

Stories podcast features kidney transplant from pastor to member

In 2012, TAB Media shared the story of how God led First Baptist Church Jacksonville to pray for Jennifer Borders, a church member who needed a kidney transplant.

Pastor Derek Staples recalls saying to Borders’ husband, Jason, one night after a special prayer meeting for her health, “You and I are going to step back and be amazed what God does to bring healing to your wife.”

A group of people from the

church volunteered to be tested to see if one of them was a possible kidney donor for Borders.

Staples thought it was possible his wife, Julie, might be — she was the same blood type as Borders.

But when the results came back, she wasn’t a match. He was.

“With his (blood type) being

different, we knew it was a God thing,” Borders said.

Staples said he remembers the Sunday morning he told the church he was a match after they had been “praying intently” for God to provide a kidney for her.

“I remember the look on everybody’s face,” he said. “We all knew that the Lord was showing up and showing out. It was clearly of the Lord. We could not have orchestrated these events in any other way. There’s no other

For more information, visit tabonline.org/stories.

way you could explain it but that it was just the greatness of God.”

Borders said she feels nothing but gratitude for those who have been willing to give her the gift of life — first her mom, who donated a kidney to her when she was 16; then a friend who donated another to her when she was 30; then Staples at age 40.

Second story

Their story is the second one featured in the newest season of the Stories podcast, Season 7: The Living Donor Story.

You can hear more about how God’s sovereignty showed up in their story, how it changed Borders’ life and how it strengthened the faith of their church.

Listen at tabonline.org/stories or wherever you get your favorite podcasts.



Jennifer Borders (left) stands with her pastor, Derek Staples, who said many prayers were answered when in 2011 he was able to donate a kidney to Borders. Staples reflects that the only explanation is “the greatness of God.”



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The TIMOTHY INITIATIVE is a select group of college juniors and seniors from campuses across Alabama who have demonstrated a deep desire to explore what it means to be a missional leader for the Gospel and to spend their final college years in a mentoring experience designed to equip them for a lifetime of mission and ministry in any area of our world and culture.



TimothyAL.org

The culture is changing. Threats to religious freedom are increasing. Is your church legally prepared?

The Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions has teamed up with ADF Church Alliance so your church can get legal guidance at a discounted rate and be as prepared as possible when it comes to your church's religious liberties.

ADF Church Alliance is an affordable legal membership program for churches. We help prepare your church and protect your right to operate, teach and minister according to biblical principles – without fear of unjust government intervention.

FOUR WAYS YOUR ADF MEMBERSHIP WILL BENEFIT YOUR CHURCH RIGHT AWAY

Document review: ADF reviews your governing documents from a religious liberty perspective to help ensure your church has the greatest religious freedom legal protections possible.

Direct access to attorneys: When religious liberty-related questions or threats arise, you can consult directly with an attorney.

Resources: Stay on top of trending news and laws impacting churches with access to legal resources.

Representation: Should your church ever face a religious liberty threat, ADF will represent your church in court, when necessary and appropriate, at no additional cost.

Visit ADFChurchAlliance.org/ALSBOM today to apply, and receive a 20% discount on this already affordable program by using promo code **ALSBOM20**.



SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE BOOK OF THE YEAR

When life is suddenly and dramatically interrupted, what do you do? React in fear, despair, become overwhelmed with anxiety, just give up? "Goodnight, Sweetheart" tells the story of how Alan Johnston dealt with the 16-year illness and eventual death from Alzheimer's of his beloved wife, Judy. It won Book of the Year at the Southern Christian Writers Conference.

Alan's second book was just released and is called "Chosen ... Answering the Call of Jesus." It focuses on Jesus as the CEO of a multinational ministry and His selection of His team and how His process of choosing them is vastly different than most leaders. It includes chapters on the twelve apostles and drives home the truth that His call is as pertinent today as those many centuries ago, and we too must decide how and when we will answer the call of Jesus.

Available for purchase at Amazon.com



Alan Johnston is a retired pastor living in Chattanooga, Tenn. During his 54 years of ministry, he pastored churches in Alabama and Tennessee, and during 34 of those years he was also a certified financial planner. He is founder of Path2Truth Ministry and spends much of his time teaching and writing. For more information, visit Path2Truth.com.



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