

The Alabama Baptist

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Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.



Photo by William Haun/Florida Baptist Convention
FBC Horseshoe Beach in Florida, for the third time in 13 months following Helene, sustained extensive damage from destructive hurricanes. Still, the church's cross reaches high into the sky as a beacon of hope for the disheartened community.

Storm weary

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers meet needs in active hurricane season

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Cookie Baker's map is full of digital pins — chainsaw jobs that have been done, jobs that are ready to be done and job requests that still need to be assessed.

In total, as of Oct. 10, around 700 people in the Clearwater, South Carolina area had requested help

with tree removal in the wake of Hurricane Helene — and that's not the end of the needs, said Baker, white hat leader for Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief.

"It is busy, wide open — people are still coming in asking for help and calling in with job requests," she said.

Since Helene hit, more than 150 ABDR volunteers have deployed to help with chainsaw work and pre-

pare meals in Clearwater, as well as serve thousands of meals out of a mass feeding kitchen in Alma, Georgia.

Hurricane Milton

At press time Alabama teams were also preparing to help those affected by Hurricane Milton, which made landfall near Siesta Key, Florida, as a Category 3 hurricane on Oct. 9. Milton brought

with it 120-mile-per-hour winds and heavy rain that caused flash floods. More than 3 million people lost power. The storm also spawned tornadoes.

Overall, Southern Baptist volunteers are stretched thin as they work to keep up with the devastation caused by the storms. But even as they look to help Milton victims in Florida, Baker said they won't

(See 'More,' page 7)

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‘Build it strong’

State missionary Daniel Edmonds releases discipleship resource

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Daniel Edmonds said over the years as he’s visited with churches, when they ask how to get a disciple-making movement started, he says this: “Start small. Do it right. Build it strong.”

“It’s been a driving idea in my life,” said Edmonds, director of the office of Sunday School and discipleship at the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. “Ultimately, it’s what Jesus did.”

That’s Edmonds’ main recommendation in his new book, which bears the same name as his mantra: “Start Small. Do It Right. Build It Strong.”

He suggests that individuals and churches look to Jesus as their sole guide for how disciple making should look, even if it doesn’t look like what they’re used to. He pointed to the story in Luke 5 of Jesus getting in the boat with Peter.

“He looks at Peter and says, ‘Launch out into the deep and let down the net for a catch,’” Edmonds said. “Peter responds by basically saying, ‘We’ve never done it that way before, but because You said so, we’ll do it.’ And they got a huge catch.”

Edmonds said when he decided to

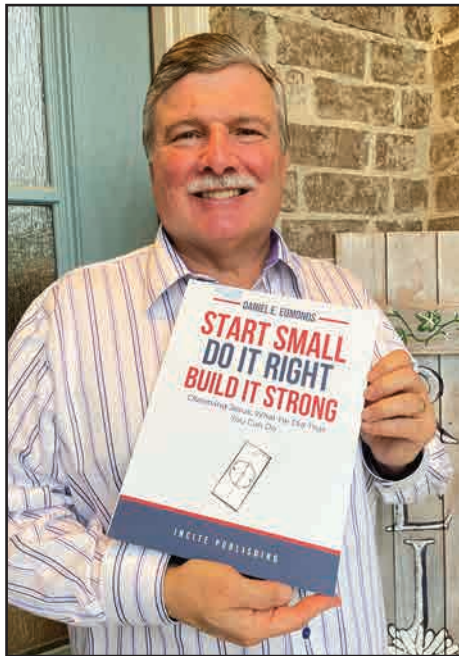


Photo courtesy of Daniel Edmonds

gear his ministry toward encouraging people to listen to Jesus rather than “we’ve never done it that way before,” it was a “life-changing moment” for him.

Invitations from Jesus

In the pages of his book, he leads people down a path anchored by four invitations from Jesus — come and see, be with Me, follow Me and abide in Me.

He also walks readers through the benefits of different group sizes

— large-group worship gatherings where people can “come and see,” medium-sized group meetings modeled after the 12 disciples and small-group gatherings modeled after the relationship Peter, James and John had with Jesus.

And then he talks about the intimate group — God and the individual, the personal relationship where a person “abides” in Him. The smallest group is the most powerful and the essential starting point.

“We should create gatherings where people can come and see Jesus, but the real change takes place in the ‘be with me,’” Edmonds said. “They can come and see Jesus and respond to him as Messiah, but they become disciples when He calls those He wants to be with Him so He can send them.”

Mark Gainey, executive director of Incite Ministries, which published Edmonds’ book (available through Amazon), said, “It’s a great ... guide for those of us who serve in normal-sized, established churches.

“It’s so helpful in thinking through ... how we can use what we have to be a church who makes disciples who make disciples,” said Gainey, who also serves as pastor of Fulton-dale First Baptist Church.

D-Life boot camp set for Oct. 19 in Trussville

What if you could train every member of your church to be a personal disciple maker? What if you could build a true disciple-making culture in your ministry?

— Correction —

In the Oct. 3 issue of The Alabama Baptist, the article “Child back in school 8 days after near drowning” stated 5-year-old Charlie Guisinger was found face down in a swimming pool after two minutes. He was actually found at the bottom of the pool after around 40 seconds. We regret reporting inaccurate information.

Pastor Bill Wilks said this concept is the precise purpose of D-Life.

D-Life exists to equip common people to be Christ-like disciple makers, he shares often.

“It’s a proven plan for making disciples who make disciples — anytime and anywhere. As a result, ministries all over the world are using D-Life as a tool to equip and empower their people for a lifestyle of disciple-making.”

Wilks and his wife, Rondie, as well as other D-Life trainers are leading D-Life Boot Camps across the nation, and the next one available in the Birmingham area is coming up Oct. 19.

“In a D-Life Boot Camp, we don’t just talk about discipleship,” Wilks

said. “Believers will learn how to make disciples who make disciples as a way of life. We will role play, share exciting stories and equip believers with a proven disciple-making process modeled after Jesus. Attending a D-Life Boot Camp is life-changing and will be one of the greatest investments of time you have ever made.”

The goal of D-Life is to see a global grassroots disciple-making movement, he added.

“We want you to join the movement. Bring as many as you can to our Central Alabama D-Life Boot Camp on Sat., Oct. 19, at North-Park Baptist Church in Trussville. Register now at: <https://subpla.sh/9wt6jmn>.” (The Alabama Baptist)

The Alabama Baptist

“If ye continue in My word, then ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31-32

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The crossword puzzle
can be found on page 19.



Rashional Thoughts

By Jennifer Davis Rash
President and Editor-in-Chief

 jrash@thealabamabaptist.org

 @RashionalThts

30 years later – remembering Hudson Baggett and seeking to boost his intern fund

Thirty years ago, Hudson Baggett, then editor of The Alabama Baptist, felt compelled to invest in and equip future generations for Christian service.

In May 1994, he shared his vision with the board of directors, recommending the establishment of an endowment fund for causes like scholarships, lectureships, workshops and more.

After Dr. Baggett's sudden death Nov. 17, 1994, the board of directors of The Alabama Baptist knew exactly how to honor him. The Hudson Baggett Endowment Fund was established, and in December 1995, with the Baggett family's support, the board approved using the income from the endowment to fund an intern program for college students.

These internships have provided hands-on experience, mentorship and spiritual guidance to help young journalists grow professionally and in their faith for these past three decades.

To donate:

- ▶ Visit tabonline.org/givetoTAB.
- ▶ Make a check to: The Alabama Baptist (designate for Hudson Baggett intern fund). Mail to: 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.
- ▶ Call 1-800-803-5201 to provide credit card information.

However, the fund only has enough remaining in it for two or three more intern semesters, so we wanted to reach out to see if you might help us replenish it.

We need the support of dedicated individuals like you who share our passion for faith-based journalism and the development of future leaders.

As we recognize the 30th anniversary of Dr. Baggett's death the day after the annual meeting in 1994 and the establishment of the fund, we invite you to partner with us in this endeavor.

Your donation, regardless of size, will help us build a legacy

of faith-based journalism that will influence generations to come and ensure the hope found in Christ continues to be shared through compelling stories of the work of Baptists around the world.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to make a difference and for your consistent readership and encouragement.

We are grateful for your continued support.



Photo by Maggie Evans/The Alabama Baptist

Your Voice



Share your comments, letters to the editor, blog excerpts, social media posts

The Praxis of Faith and Learning at Samford University

By Bryan Gill and Michael Hardin
Samford University

How does a Christian university change a culture and overcome fear, differences of opinions and a faculty body comprised of diverse Christian traditions? How does the university guard against an administratively-driven, plug-and-play approach to faith and learning integration that would infringe on the faculty member's academic freedom?

The starting point for us at Samford University was to clarify our priorities in hiring practices and to build trust among existing faculty. ... Samford University set out to prove that you can hire faithful Christian faculty who are also highly qualified academics and that it is possible to support faith and learning integration without infringing on academic freedom. ...

First steps

We started by clarifying and emphasizing our faculty hiring practices. As a private Christian university, we unapologetically stated our goal to seek and prefer academically qualified, Christian faculty for all faculty searches.

To help integrate this commitment to faculty hiring and also reinforce it across academic programs, several important practices became part of the faculty hiring process.

First, a member of the provost's

office was assigned to each search committee. In addition to ensuring hiring practices and policies were being uniformly followed, these representatives also enabled the provost's office to have a front-row seat



GILL

to matters of faith commitment and missional alignment of faculty candidates.

Secondly, each faculty search team included a faculty member from outside the academic department/school conducting the search. The inclusion of these faculty enriched the search process and helped

indirectly disseminate commitment to hiring faculty members committed to the Christian mission.

Faculty support

... In the Spring of 2019, Provost Mike Hardin formed the Spiritual Life Leadership Collaborative consisting of faculty and staff across campus. This collaborative examined every aspect of the spiritual makeup of Samford from the curriculum, faculty development and expectations and cocurricular spiritual development of students.

The strategic evaluation produced a list of objectives that would address the areas of opportunity revealed by the audit. ... A Faith and Learning Taskforce was formed in Academic Affairs ... to identify ways to equip faculty to support the Christian mission of the university through personal and professional development opportunities.

... When President Beck Taylor arrived at Samford in 2021, he, alongside his executive leadership team and the board of trustees, elevated faith and learning as a priority on campus.

Fresh wind

Fueling the momentum created in Academic Affairs, a fresh wind blew through the campus as faith and learning became a centerpiece of Fidelitas, Samford's strategic plan. Faith and learning integration became one of the four main goals in the Academic Distinction theme of Fidelitas. ...

The Faith and Learning Taskforce convened regularly and developed the following mission statement: "to equip Samford faculty to thoughtfully integrate a commitment to faith in Jesus Christ with the pursuit of academic excellence." ...

Four emphases emerged: Personal Spiritual Growth, Pedagogical Integration, Scholarship Development and Vocational Exploration.

... In the Spring of 2024, the [faith and learning initiative] became the Office of Faith, Learning and Vocation (FLV). Dr. Bryan Gill was named director of the office under the Faculty Success Center within Academic Affairs. The formation of this office again elevated the university's commitment to faith and learning integration. ...

We developed the Christian

Teacher Scholar Program, a three-year interdisciplinary cohort-based program where faculty explore their faith, their role as teacher and how faith can influence their scholarship.

... The faith and learning integration is not a one-size-fits-all solution. There is a spectrum of interpretations. Some faculty pray or read Scripture to begin their classes. Some incorporate biblical justice for marginalized people groups in internships and practicums. And there are faculty who challenge students to think deeply about the intersection of their faith and their discipline. ...

We support faculty wherever they find themselves on this spectrum of approaches, and in some instances, challenge them to expand their view of faith and learning integration. We are establishing a culture that encourages

and equips faculty to bring their whole selves as faculty at Samford University.



HARDIN

EDITOR'S NOTE — This article was featured in *Christian Scholar's Review* in September and was written by Bryan Gill and Michael Hardin as an academic evaluation of Samford University's emphasis on hiring faithful Christian faculty without infringing on academic freedom. Gill, D.Min., serves as director of the office of faith, learning and vocation at Samford. Hardin, Ph.D., is former provost and vice president of academic affairs and a current professor at Samford. This article has been edited for space. Read the full article at tabonline.org/samford.

Share online or email news@thealabamabaptist.org

“He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. ... Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.”

ISAIAH 40:29-31

All churches must see themselves as agents of gospel change. Ministry must always be formed by the needs of the community and not the wants of the members. I am talking missional purpose over member preference, restless hearts over restful pews and choosing every day to be desperate to see the lost saved instead of the saved comfortable. Every church is a mission center and not a religious museum. Every. Single. One. The Body of Christ must mimic the heart of its Savior. What is the heart of the Savior? In Luke 19, Jesus stops as He rides into Jerusalem and weeps over the loss of His city. Our people must have a burden for the lost in their community. Healthy churches weep over their city, and it starts with the church leaders. For almost a century the Church has practiced a myopic ministry in which the needs of members trump the urgency to rescue the perishing. It is time for a shift in focus.

Kevin Blackwell
drkevinblackwell.com

October means cooler weather, brown leaves and fall festivals. October is the wind down from school starting and the wind up for all things football. October is change. And for all of these things, I am grateful. I am grateful for change. Nope, I am not fond of change — but I appreciate that it comes anyway. I appreciate that things will be different in the next moment, the next day, the next month and certainly the next year. I appreciate that change allows each of us to become more than what we thought we could be and different from who we thought we were. Change allows us to increase our capacity and decrease our fear.

Sometimes change is deliberate and purposeful. Other times change is forced and uncomfortable. However, change brings variety and choice. Variety because we become more

diverse in our actions and abilities. Choice because we can decide to remain uncomfortable — angry and dissatisfied — or decide to embrace an opportunity to chart new waters.

In the end, change will happen; it is inevitable. How we choose to accept change will determine our next steps. Embrace change. It is, eventually, the vehicle to a new and brighter you.

Vernet Nettles
vernetcnetttles.com

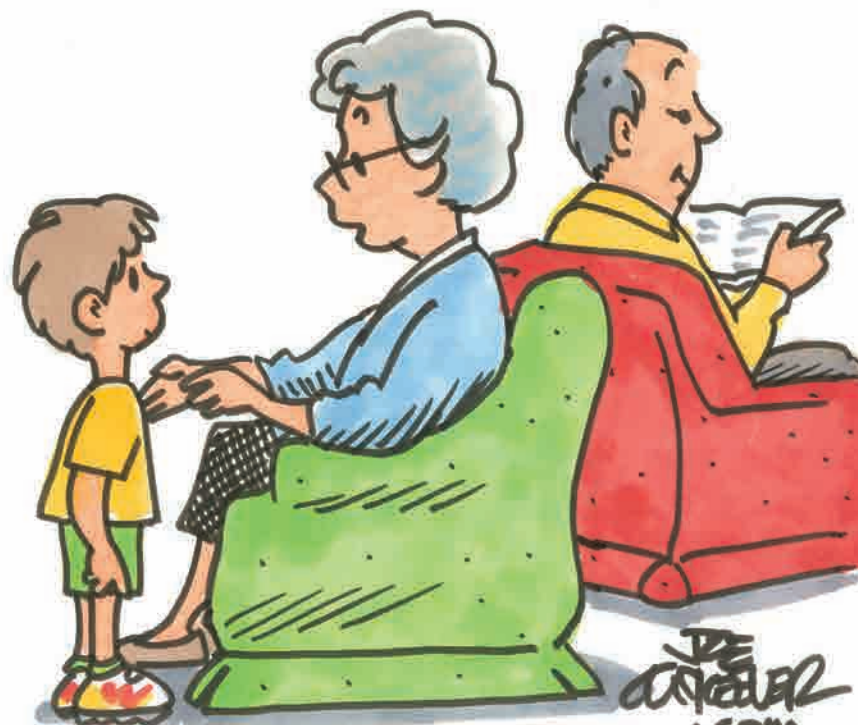
Ministry is challenging, but it's also deeply rewarding. If God has called you to serve, He will provide the tools and strength you need, as long as you are willing. Every calling is unique, and it's our responsi-

bility to follow God's leading. I am thankful for the opportunities I've had and look forward to whatever comes next.

Allow me to share an important word of encouragement from Scripture: "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry" (1 Tim. 1:12). This verse reminds us that ministry is a gift from God, and it is by His grace that we are called and equipped. If you feel unworthy or unsure of your calling, remember that God Himself enables you to carry out the work He has set before you.

Chris Crain
Executive director
Birmingham Metro Association

"HONEY, GRANDPA DIDN'T ACTUALLY HANG THE MOON. HE JUST HELD THE LADDER."



On hold, or holding on?

By Karen Moore
karenmooreauthor.com

Hebrews 10:23 talks about holding on, encouraging us to trust and believe what we have learned in the past. It says, "We must hold on to God's promise that we have said we believed. And we must never let go. He has promised and He will do it."

I don't know how you interpret this idea, but it strikes me that we often feel like we are holding on ... holding on to our beliefs, holding on to our principles, holding on to those we love for dear life.

We are holding on because chaos makes us feel like we are losing our footing, unable to find a safe place to be. We may often find ourselves feeling like our lives are "on hold."

We wonder if God is still paying attention or if He knows the mess we are struggling to manage. How do we keep holding on when we've been on hold for a long time already?

Waiting on God

I can't help thinking about the Old Testament story of Moses and the Israelites who were waiting for him to come down from the mountain. ... They were patient for a few days, but as time went by they ... started doubting everything they had already learned about God. ... They decided they needed to take matters into their own hands ... so they gave up their first love and stopped holding on to their Creator.

It's tempting for us to do the same. We look out at the world and wonder how we can manage, how we can hold on to our hope and our possibilities. We wonder if there are other options, other ways to hold on. Often, we end up holding on to things that do not serve us well.

It's not easy to hold on, but it's easier if you think carefully about the One you're holding on to. It's easier if you remind yourself that God is still there. He has not gone away. ...

3 stories you should know



Photo courtesy of Lystra Baptist Church

After several years of growth, Lystra Baptist Church in Cullman has a “problem,” according to pastor John Garrison — they’re running out of space. The church held a groundbreaking celebration Sept.

22 for its new sanctuary, which they hope to complete in eight or nine months. Pictured here is Garrison (front with shovel), the church’s building committee and their builder and draftsman. To read the full story, visit tabonline.org/lystra. (The Alabama Baptist)

War in Middle East continues to intensify

The war between Israel and Hamas only continues to intensify one year after Hamas militants launched a deadly attack on Israel Oct. 7, 2023, killing 1,200 people and kidnapping 250 others.

“It was intended by Hamas to be an attack upon Israel that we now know ... Hamas hoped then would be joined by others,” Al Mohler said on his podcast The Briefing on the one-year anniversary.

“And as it turns out, a group like Hezbollah in Lebanon did a day later state their solidarity with Hamas, but it would be almost a year after that before Israel and Hezbollah would actually be in an exchange of warfare. Hamas overestimated the power of its patron, that would be Iran — and as others have noted — it underestimated the strength of Israel.” (The Baptist Paper)

Flooding destruction also happening in Nepal

Devastating flooding and landslides in Nepal recently claimed the lives of more than 200 people, while others remain missing or left to recover from the damage.

The latest figures showed 228 died and 158 were injured from damage caused by the heavy rain that fell near the end of Nepal’s monsoon season, which usually ends by mid-September. At least 25 people reportedly remained missing, as of Oct. 2. More than 4,000 people had been rescued, according to reports from Nepal’s military. The flooding damaged 16 hydroelectric power plants and 18 other construction projects, Associated Press reported.

Send Relief — the compassion arm of the International Mission Board and North American Mission Board — continues to monitor the situation. (The Baptist Paper)

Persecuted church

Somalian man and his family assaulted for his Christian faith

MOGADISHU, Somalia — A man who put his faith in Jesus Christ in March was attacked in May and again in July, along with his family.

Morning Star News reported that Muslim relatives attacked Mohammad Abdul on May 5 in Kismayo in the Lower Juba region of Somalia. Other relatives hid his wife and children while he received care in a hospital. The family later moved 31 miles away, but five relatives located them and assaulted the entire family July 8.

Islam is the state religion of Somalia, and its constitution prohibits Muslims from converting and propagation of any other religion. Somalia is No. 2 on Open Doors’ 2024 World Watch List of places most difficult to be a Christian.

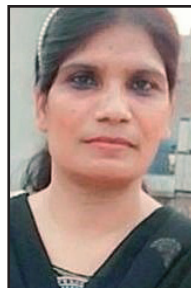
Christian mom gets death penalty for violating blasphemy laws in Pakistan

LAHORE, Pakistan — A Christian mother convicted of violating Pakistan’s blasphemy laws has been given a death sentence.

The decision against Shagufta Kiran was handed down Sept. 18, reported media sources Christian Daily International and Morning Star News.

Kiran had been charged under Section 295-C, which concerns insulting Muhammad, the prophet of Islam. Conviction under that statute has a mandatory death penalty.

Kiran was fined \$1,077 (300,000 rupees) at the close of her trial, which spanned three years.



KIRAN

Her attorney plans to appeal the conviction.

Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency arrested her July 29, 2021, in Islamabad over an allegation of having shared on WhatsApp material deemed “blasphemous,” the news outlets state. The posting allegedly occurred September 2020.

Authorities initially detained her husband and two of her four children but later released them.

Her attorney said Kiran, a former nurse, had joined several app groups to tell people about Jesus Christ. The Muslim who filed the complaint against her is an administrator of one of the sites, according to information from the attorney and news outlets.

Pakistan is No. 7 on Open Doors’ 2024 World Watch List of places most difficult to be a Christian.

More volunteers are needed

Three disaster relief training opportunities this month in Rainsville and Prattville

(continued from page 1)

turn their backs on those who still have massive needs in South Carolina.

Residents in the area “have got a mess up here,” Baker said.

Typically chainsaw teams can do several jobs in a day, but many of these job requests are daylong projects, she said — they might find 10 to 20 trees down at one house.

“This could take weeks to finish,” Baker said.

Mark Wakefield, state disaster relief strategist, said more volunteers will be needed in the coming weeks. He encouraged anyone interested in volunteering to attend one of three volunteer training sessions — Oct. 25–26 in Rainsville for chainsaw volunteers and Oct. 19 or 26 in Prattville for feeding team volunteers.

To sign up for one of the training sessions or learn more about how you can help Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief as they come alongside those affected by the hurricanes, visit sbdr.org.

For more information,
visit sbdr.org.



Facebook photo

Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief teams are helping cut and remove fallen trees in the Clearwater, South Carolina, area this week in the wake of Hurricane Helene. Many more volunteers are needed to help out in the coming weeks.

Martha Hughes (left) and Mark Hughes unload food in Alma, Georgia, where Alabama Baptists' mass feeding unit is set up.



Facebook photo



Facebook photo

Amy Moore (right) and Deborah Platt prepare green beans in Alma, Georgia. The feeding team there has been serving thousands of meals a day since Hurricane Helene hit.

Alabama news

AUTAUGA ASSOCIATION

► **Calvary Baptist Church, Prattville**, will host a fall festival and trunk or treat event Oct. 26, 1–3 p.m., featuring games, prizes, candy and popcorn. Dave Burns is pastor.

BARBOUR ASSOCIATION

► **Randy Campbell** is the new pastor of **Emmanuel Baptist Church, Arifton**, after serving for a year as interim. He previously served as music minister for Clio Baptist Church, where his twin brother, Rick, is pastor. Campbell worked for 30 years at WestRock, Cotton. He earned a law enforcement certificate from Troy University and attended the former



Photo courtesy of Randy Campbell

Columbus School of Theology. Campbell and his wife, Kathy, have four children and four grandchildren.

► **Richard Harvey**, who previously served as pastor of Cross Baptist Church, Eufaula, is now pastor of Shady Grove Baptist Church, Lucedale, Mississippi.

► **John Anthony Peters** is the new pastor of **Anderson Baptist Church, Clio**. He previously served as supply preacher for several churches, led young adult Sunday School, children and youth at Mount Enon Baptist Church, Midland City, and worked with ministries doing yard work and home repair for those in need. Peters attended Alabama Aviation College and works for M1 Support Services at Fort Novosel (formerly Fort Rucker) maintaining aircraft for the army. He and his wife, Ashley Nicole, have three children.



PETERS

BETHEL ASSOCIATION

► **Allen Atkins** is the new pastor of **Sweet Water Baptist Church**. He previously served as pastor of The Fellowship, Albertville. Atkins is married to Lisa.

BETHLEHEM ASSOCIATION

► **Terry Barksdale** recently retired from his role as minister of music and senior adults for **Mexia Baptist Church** after serving 50 years as a minister of music in nine churches across Ala-

bama and Louisiana. Mexia Baptist honored Barksdale and his wife, Melissa, with a concert and reception. They have two children. Randy Breedlove is pastor.



Photo courtesy of Stacey Carroll

BLOUNT ASSOCIATION

► **Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church, Holly Pond**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 10:30 a.m. Lunch will be served following the worship service, and singing will begin at 1:30 p.m. featuring southern gospel group The Williamsons from Oklahoma. Earl Harper is pastor.

CLARKE ASSOCIATION

► **Jesse Griffith** will celebrate 25 years as pastor of **Ulcanush Baptist Church, Coffeeville**, Oct. 20. He will be recognized in the 11 a.m. service with a celebration lunch to follow. He and his wife, Milinda, have three adult children, three grandsons and two great-grandchildren.

► **Amity Baptist Church, Whatley**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 10:30 a.m. Fred Wilson will preach, Glory Road will sing and dinner

OBITUARIES

LADELL BLANTON

Ladell Blanton, former director of missions for Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations, died Oct. 3. He was 85.

Blanton earned his bachelor's degree in chemistry from Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi, then worked as a research chemist and manager for the Mississippi Chemical Corporation in Yazoo City, Mississippi, from 1961 to 1985. During this time, he felt called to serve the Lord in ministry.



BLANTON

In 1987, Blanton graduated with a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He was ordained that same year and began serving as student pastor of Myette Point Baptist Mission in Franklin, Louisiana.

He then served as pastor of First Baptist Church Tchula, Mississippi, and First Baptist Church Foxworth, Mississippi.

In 1994, he earned his doctor of ministry from Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Georgia.

From 1999 to 2003, Blanton served as director of missions for Bethlehem and Pine Barren Baptist associations before returning home to Mississippi to serve as pastor for Springdale

Baptist Church in West. He later served as interim pastor for McCool Baptist Church and eventually retired from North Union Baptist Church.

Blanton was preceded in death by his first wife, Claudette. He is survived by his second wife, Maryella; daughter, Jean Ann; sons, Michael and Jimmy; stepdaughter, Beth; six grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and two step-great-grandchildren.

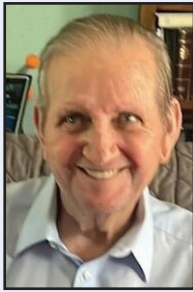
RAY CLEVINGER

Ray Clevenger, a retired pastor and former hospice and prison ministry volunteer, died Sept. 25. He was 83.

Clevenger was a U.S. Navy veteran and worked for 30 years as a lead mechanic for Delta Airlines before retiring from the company in 1993. He and his wife, Esther, dedicated their retirement to the Lord — Clevenger, a longtime deacon, had felt God calling him to preach the previous year.

After moving to Alabama to be near family, he was called to serve as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Heflin. During his pastorate, he was active with the Cleburne Baptist Association and Carpenters for Christ, working on many churches across the southeast.

Following his ministry at Calvary, he served as a volunteer chaplain for Regional Medical Center and New Beacon Hospice for decades. Through the Cleburne Baptist Association, he became the



CLEVINGER

official chaplain to the Cleburne County Sheriff's Department and Cleburne County Jail from 2007 to 2015. The Clevengers and other volunteers held a weekly worship service on Sunday morning and Bible studies on Mondays and Wednesdays. They baptized 149 inmates during that ministry.

He was a member of Edwardsville Baptist Church.

In a May 2000 article about his hospice work, Clevenger said, "I don't look at death as a tragedy. I really look at death as the beginning of life."

Clevenger is survived by his wife; daughters, Vicky and Loy; son, Allen; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

EARNEST TED ELROD SR.

Earnest Ted Elrod Sr., a minister for 52 years, died Oct. 1 at Cherokee Floyd Medical Center. He was 85.

A native of Cherokee County, Elrod led multiple churches in Cherokee, DeKalb and Etowah counties. He also worked at Cherokee Electric for 35 years and volunteered with the nursing home for more than 20 years.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; son, Earnest Ted Jr.; daughters, Carol and Cathy; eight grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.



ELROD

NEWS

on the grounds follows the service. Craig Weaver is pastor.

► **Evergreen Baptist Church, Jackson**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 11 a.m. Josh Patrick will bring the message; lunch will be served following the service. John Stewart is pastor.

► **Pineview Baptist Church, Thomasville**, held a note-burning ceremony during its homecoming festivities, July 28, celebrating the congregation's recent efforts to pay off the final \$450,000 on the mortgage. Pictured are (l to r): student pastor Tommy Wilcox, oldest remaining charter member Hazel Parden and pastor Marlon Brown.

► **Round Hill Baptist Church, Thomasville**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 11 a.m. Glen Elmore will bring the message; lunch will be served after the service. John Gibson is pastor.

► **Round Hill Baptist Church, Thomasville**, will celebrate homecoming Oct. 20, 11 a.m. Glen Elmore will bring the message; lunch will be served after the service. John Gibson is pastor.

EAST LIBERTY ASSOCIATION

► **Noah McGuire** is the new pastor of **West End Baptist Church, Valley**. He previously served as student



Photo courtesy of Noah McGuire

pastor of FBC Luverne; Concord Baptist Church, Salem; and Livingston FBC. McGuire holds a bachelor's degree in communication from Troy University and a master's degree in Christian ministry from Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia. He is pursuing a master of divinity degree in pastoral counseling from New Orleans Seminary. McGuire and his wife, Alaina, have two children.



Photo courtesy of Debra Sanford

ELMORE ASSOCIATION

► **Antioch Baptist Church, Titus**, celebrated its 175th anniversary Aug. 25. Special music was provided by Harlan Burton. Tommy Boshell (left), church trustee, accepted the commemorative plaque for the church presented by Wendy Westerhouse (right), executive director of the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission. Guest preacher Paul East shared a sermon titled "Is God's truth still marching on?"

MOBILE ASSOCIATION

► **Mack Morris** is serving as interim pastor of **Union Baptist Church, Grand Bay**. Morris retired from Woodridge Baptist Church, Mobile, in 2019, after serving as pastor of seven



MORRIS

churches throughout his full-time ministry. Morris and his wife, Kathy, have three children, two grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

MORGAN ASSOCIATION

► **Central Baptist Church, Decatur**, will host the North Alabama Library Conference "Bloom Where You Are Planted," Nov. 2, 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. For more information, visit tabonline.org/cbcd.

SHELBY ASSOCIATION

► **Luke Nichols** is the new student minister for **North Shelby Baptist Church, Birmingham**. He previously served as youth minister for Immanuel Baptist Church, Columbus, Mississippi, and was involved in Baptist Campus Ministries and spent two summers serving at Lifeway's Fuge camps. Nichols earned a bachelor of science degree in biomedical engineering from Mississippi State University and has since worked at Organogenesis. He is currently pursuing a master of arts degree in discipleship from New Orleans Seminary. Nichols is engaged to Avery Fowler. Jared Cornutt is pastor.



Photo courtesy of Luke Nichols

► **Wilton Baptist Church, Montevallo**, celebrated 140 years of ministry Sept. 22.

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Huntsville nurse to serve as BNF leader

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Charlotte Wyckoff said nursing has always been on her heart — she was taught from an early age to help people. It started right in her home — she was the oldest of 12 children.

“We lived in a small community in Kentucky, and we loved, and we gave,” Wyckoff said.

That took on a lot of different forms over the years. She started helping at a local hospital in her teens and became a nurse’s aid in college. She once helped deliver a neighbor’s baby.

But she said she never would have guessed that one day she would lead Baptist Nursing Fellowship, a national organization that serves as a compassion ministry of Woman’s Missionary Union.

Looking back, Wyckoff — a member of West Mastin Lake Baptist Church in Huntsville — said she can “just see the intertwining what God has purposed for my life.”

“I came from humble beginnings and have asked the Lord to continually lead and direct me, that I’d be in His will,” she said.

Wyckoff first worked as a medical technologist, then later went to school to become a registered nurse.

“Nursing has always been my love and my dream, but I got sidetracked,” she said. “God brought me back to that.”

That eventually led her to BNF, and in November 2023, she was voted the organization’s president-elect. She will begin her term in 2026.

The purpose of BNF is to equip and empower members spiritually,

be involved in planned nursing and health care programs and use their skills to help people around the world on missions trips. Anyone who has a background in health care can be a part.

Passion for missions

Wyckoff said her passion for missions outside her own community came after she and her husband moved to Huntsville and joined West Mastin Lake Baptist.

“We became involved in more missions-oriented things,” she said.

She joined BNF in the mid-1990s and fell in love with the mission. Over the years, she has held a variety of positions in the organization and has helped people in other ways, such as starting labs for sickle cell disease in Maryland and in Alabama.

Wyckoff has loved being a part of BNF’s health fairs and missions

trips and talking to people about their physical and spiritual health.

“As a part of the health screenings we offer, we’re able to talk with them and explain how important their lives are and how important it is to be in compliance with what the doctor recommends,” she said. “We’re also able to pray with them — so many people are broken these days, and they need someone to care for them.”

With that in mind, Wyckoff wants to involve as many people as she can in the mission of BNF. Members currently represent 31 states. She wants to see that expand to all 50 and to see more ethnic diversity and more men involved.

“We want to get as many people as we can exposed to medical missions work,” Wyckoff said. “This is a calling upon our lives ... to be able to fulfill His mission with the skills He has given us.”



Photo by Jennifer Davis Rash/The Alabama Baptist
CHARLOTTE WYCKOFF

For more information about national BNF, visit baptistnursingfellowship.org.

For more information about Alabama BNF, visit alabamawmu.org/baptistnursingfellowship.



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DOGWOOD

STATE CONVENTION PREVIEW

'Making a DIFFERENCE together'

2024 Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting set for Nov. 12-13 in Daphne

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Every year, Alabama Baptists gather in November to celebrate the ways that God is working through Baptist ministries around the state.

This year is no different. Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said those gathered at the Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting Nov. 12-13 in Daphne "will celebrate the many ways that many Alabama Baptists are making a difference together for the gospel."

This year's theme

The meeting will focus on the theme of DifferenceMakers based on Acts 4:13: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus."

Lance invited all state Baptists to be a part of the meeting, a sort of



Photo by Bethany Franklin/The Alabama Baptist
Last year's annual meeting was held in Montgomery where Alabama Baptists celebrated 200 years of the state convention.

"family reunion" that will be held at Eastern Shore Baptist Church.

On Tuesday evening, Nov. 12:

▶ Alabama Baptists will hear a message from Jason Allen, president of Midwestern Baptist

Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, during the Tuesday night celebration.

▶ Ram:Corps, a Christ-centered, high-impact visual brass and percussion ensemble from the Univer-

sity of Mobile, will also perform Tuesday night.

During the daytime sessions Nov. 12-13:

▶ Craig Carlisle, director of missions for Etowah Baptist Association, will deliver his address as convention president. (For more on his presidency and upcoming renomination, see story, page 15.)

Convention sermon

▶ Ben Bowden, pastor of First Baptist Church Enterprise, will preach the convention sermon.

▶ Rob Jackson, SBOM director of evangelism and church revitalization, and Albert Williams, pastor of St. James Baptist Church in Dothan, will each share a message on the DifferenceMakers theme.

▶ Ministries from around the state will share about ways they've seen God at work over the past year.

For a full schedule, see page 14.

For more information, visit alsbom.org/convention.

Messengers to consider 2025 Cooperative Program budget proposal

Messengers to the Nov. 12-13 state convention annual meeting will have opportunity to vote on several business items, including the proposed 2025 Cooperative Program allocation budget.

The proposed budget of \$37.5 million is coming to messengers as approved by the State

Board of Missions board of trustees in August and is an increase of \$500,000 over the 2024 budget.

Missions and ministry

The budget recommendation maintains the 50-50 percentage allocation between the missions and ministry work done through the Alabama Baptist State Convention and the national

Southern Baptist efforts.

"It's a true 50-50 percent allocation, and we are among a few states that do that," said Rick Lance, SBOM executive director, adding that Alabama Baptists also remain "the No. 1 contributor to SBC causes."

The 50% of CP dollars remaining in Alabama is divided among SBOM and the various convention enti-

ties and auxiliaries, Lance explained. Any additional receipts coming in beyond the budgeted amount will be distributed by the same percentages.

Special offerings

Messengers also will be asked to approve the following 2025 special offering goals:

▶ Lottie Moon Christmas

Offering: \$12 million

▶ Annie Armstrong Easter Offering: \$6 million

▶ Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries: \$3 million

▶ Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering: \$1.2 million

▶ World Hunger Offering: \$800,000
(The Alabama Baptist)

STATE CONVENTION PREVIEW

Make plans to attend *The Gathering*
our annual family reunion of Alabama Baptists!
NOVEMBER 12-13, 2024
Eastern Shore Baptist Church, Daphne

DifferenceMakers
Acts 4:13

YOU'RE INVITED!

TUESDAY EVENING

Jason Allen, president,
Midwestern Baptist
Theological Seminary
RamCorps, University
of Mobile



RamCorps



Alabama Baptist Family,

As with every year, the State Convention Annual Meeting is an opportunity for a family reunion of Alabama Baptists. In November, we are gathering at Eastern Shore Baptist Church in Daphne. This congregation does such a fine job of hosting their fellow Alabama Baptists!

This year's Annual Meeting will focus on the theme of DifferenceMakers based on Acts 4:13. Throughout the State Convention gathering, we will celebrate the many ways that Alabama Baptists are making a difference together for the Gospel. I hope you can join us.

Rick Lance
Executive Director
Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions

P.S. I invite you to visit my blog at ricklance.com/differencemakers to learn how your state missionaries are helping to make a difference in the missional life of Alabama Baptists and Great Commission ministries!

Greetings, Alabama Baptists!

I'm getting really excited about our family gathering in November at Eastern Shore Baptist Church in Daphne on November 12-13. We will have an opportunity to do our Kingdom-centered business, but I'm also excited about something new. You'll be introduced to our new effort to elevate and help bivocational ministers and to call out the called to bivocational ministry. We will also have our inaugural Young Pastors Network meeting. It's going to be a great couple of days. I will look forward to seeing you in Daphne!

Craig Carlisle
President,
Alabama Baptist State Convention



TUESDAY MORNING

Craig Carlisle, President's Address
Rob Jackson, DifferenceMakers
Through Evangelism



WEDNESDAY MORNING

Albert Williams, DifferenceMakers
Through Disciple Making
Ben Bowden, Convention Sermon



Cartoonist Joe McKeever will be in the exhibit hall to draw sketches of those who stop by.

Visit alsbom.org/convention for complete schedule, hotel information and more or contact Amy Nelson, anelson@alsbom.org, (334) 613-2231.



alsbom.org/convention

STATE CONVENTION PREVIEW

The Gathering
ORDER OF BUSINESS

NOVEMBER 12-13, 2024 • EASTERN SHORE BAPTIST CHURCH, DAPHNE • THEME: DIFFERENCEMAKERS • SCRIPTURE: ACTS 4:13

TUESDAY MORNING

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leader.....	Lance Maddox
8:15	Pre-session Music	Alabama Singing Men and Women
8:35	Prayer.....	Charles Taylor
8:40	Call to Order	Craig Carlisle
	Greetings	
	Baldwin Baptist Association.....	Rick Ellison
	Eastern Shore Baptist Church.....	Stuart Davidson
	Congregational Music	Lance Maddox
8:50	Enrollment of Messengers.....	Debbie Oliver
8:55	Committee on Order of Business.....	Rusty Sowell
9:00	Committee Appointments	Craig Carlisle
9:05	Memorial Service.....	Hugh Richardson
9:15	Introduction of Resolutions.....	Teman Knight
9:20	Special Music	Alabama Singing Men and Women
9:30	DifferenceMakers Through Evangelism	Rob Jackson
9:55	DifferenceMakers Discussion	
	<i>The Alabama Baptist, Jennifer Davis Rash;</i>	
	<i>Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, Wendy Westerhouse</i>	
	Committee Reports	
10:10	Committee on Committees.....	Jim Cooley
10:20	Committee on Boards and Commissions	Mat Alexander
	Recognitions	
10:30	Recognition of Former Convention Presidents ...	Rick Lance
10:40	Recognition of New Pastors and New Church Staff Members	Mike Jackson
10:45	Celebrating the Cooperative Program	Jay Stewart
10:55	DifferenceMakers Discussion	
	<i>The Baptist Foundation of Alabama, John Ashworth;</i>	
	<i>Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center, Russell Kliner</i>	
11:10	Miscellaneous Business	
11:15	Presentation of Convention President	Rick Lance
11:20	Special Music	Nathan Edwards and FBC Gadsden Choir
11:25	President’s Address	Craig Carlisle
11:55	Benediction	Tyler Armstrong

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leaders	Chris Turner and Scott Lee
	Worship	
1:30	Congregational Music	Chris Turner
1:40	Prayer.....	Josh Noojin
1:45	Report of Executive Director	Rick Lance
2:00	State Board of Missions Recommendations and Convention Recognitions	
2:35	Update on Sexual Abuse Prevention and ARITF.....	Craig Carlisle

2:45	DifferenceMakers Discussion	
	<i>Alabama Baptist Children’s Homes & Family Ministries, Rod Marshall; Alabama Baptist Retirement Centers, Ken Schroeder</i>	
3:00	Congregational Singing.	Scott Lee
3:05	DifferenceMakers Through Calling Out the Called	Kevin Blackwell
3:25	DifferenceMakers Discussion	
	<i>Alabama Woman’s Missionary Union, Candace McIntosh; Alabama Citizens Action Program, Greg Davis</i>	
3:40	Miscellaneous Business	
	Committee Reports	
3:45	Resolutions Committee.....	Teman Knight
4:00	Committee on Time, Place, and Preacher ...	John Nicholson
4:05	Audit and Insurance Committees.....	Mike Jackson
4:10	Benediction.....	Will Standridge

TUESDAY EVENING

6:15	Presession Music	Frank Jones
6:30	Welcome and Prayer	Rick Lance
6:35	Congregational Singing	Karen Gosselin
6:40	Missions Recognitions.....	Rick Lance
6:50	Instrumental Praise	RamCorps
7:15	Congregational Singing	Karen Gosselin
7:20	Message	Jason Allen
8:00	Benediction.....	Rick Lance

WEDNESDAY MORNING

	Pianist.....	Frank Jones
	Worship Leaders	Corey Stringer and Joe Howell
	Worship	
8:30	Congregational Music	Corey Stringer
8:35	Prayer.....	Jared Cornutt
8:40	DifferenceMakers Through Disciple Making	Albert Williams
9:05	Election of Officers	
9:15	Previously Scheduled Business	
9:45	Resolutions Committee Report	Teman Knight
10:00	DifferenceMakers Discussion	
	<i>University of Mobile, Charles Smith;</i>	
	<i>Samford University, Beck Taylor</i>	
10:20	Election of Officers	
10:30	Congregational Music	Joe Howell
10:35	Introduction of Convention Preacher and Alternate Preacher.....	Craig Carlisle
	Special Music.....	Chris Duke
	Scripture	Andy John King
10:45	Convention Sermon.....	Ben Bowden
11:15	Introduction of Convention Officers.....	Rick Lance
11:20	Benediction and Adjournment.....	Eric Sexton

STATE CONVENTION PREVIEW

Carlisle 'more humbled' for possible 2nd term as Alabama convention president

By Jennifer Davis Rash
The Alabama Baptist

Alabama Baptist State Convention president Craig Carlisle has agreed to serve a second one-year term in the role if elected by messengers to the upcoming annual meeting in November.

Carlisle, who was elected to his first term during the 2023 annual meeting, said, "I was humbled when I was elected as president last year. I'm even more humbled now that I have seen so much that I get to serve Alabama Baptists."

'We are unified'

"Over the last year I have had the opportunity to travel all over our state," he shared with The Alabama Baptist. "I've visited almost all our campus ministers on campus, and I've attended at least one board meeting of most of our entities. I hope to complete all campuses and entities before the state convention annual meeting takes place

Nov. 12–13 at Eastern Shore Baptist Church in Daphne.

"The conclusion I've drawn is ... Alabama Baptists are the best," he said. "We are unified and on mission."

Derek Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church Tillman's Corner, announced Oct. 7 his plans to nominate Carlisle during the annual meeting. Allen also nominated Carlisle for his first term as president last year.

"Craig has served Alabama Baptists with exceptional skill and commitment over the past more than 10 months," Allen said. "Since being elected last November, Craig has traveled across the state to encourage and strengthen Alabama Baptist churches, associations and entities. He has specifically worked to support bivocational pastors, church planting and church revitalization."

Carlisle also has been instrumental in helping with the coming launch of a new



Photo by Van Payne/The Alabama Baptist
Craig Carlisle, who has served as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention this past year, participates in an SBC Executive Committee meeting as one of Alabama's representatives on the board of trustees.

emphasis on bivocational ministry.

"Craig understands how our family of churches functions ... and understands pastors ... and the needs of local churches," Allen said, noting Carlisle served as a pastor of three different churches over the course of 30 years before moving into his current role at Etowah Baptist Association.

Carlisle, who serves as

associational mission strategist/director of missions for Etowah Association, "knows how to lead with skill and boldness ... has led the association in a time of growth and renewal ... and has continued his ministry of prayer to over 700 pastors and ministry leaders."

"Craig continues to be a pastor to pastors, and he has represented our state exceptionally well as a board of trustees member of the SBC Executive Committee.

"I talk to Craig regularly, and he is always on the road headed to serve a church,

pastor or association somewhere in our state," Allen said. "Even when he's on vacation, he is available to our pastors and churches. Despite an incredibly busy year, Craig is willing to serve for a second term.

"When I have the honor of nominating my friend, Dr. Craig Carlisle, to serve a second term as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, I will be nominating a well-known friend of Alabama Baptist pastors and churches. I hope and trust the other messengers to our state convention will join me in supporting Craig as our president for a second term."

Carlisle was the only nominee announced for the office of president at press time.

Vice presidents

Current vice presidents are Huntsville-area pastor Jarman Leatherwood serving as first vice and Trussville-area pastor Ryan Whitley serving as second vice. They both confirmed they plan to be nominated for second terms as well.

No other nominees were known at press time.

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Lass WORDS

BY KEN LASS
The Alabama Baptist



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Planning for the end

I have lived long enough to realize I am not going to be on this earth forever. Lately I've been thinking about finally tackling the task of making final arrangements.

My wife Sharon still finds the subject uncomfortable, so she chose not to accompany me when I made an appointment with a local funeral home. I just wanted to get an idea of what it will cost to die.

I found out I can't afford it.

Decisions

Seriously, I never realized there are so many decisions. The details of planning your own visitation, ceremony and burial (or cremation) are endless.

They took me through their showroom. It's a weird feeling trying to pick out your own casket and vault, trying to picture yourself lying there. Will I look okay? Will my hair be combed nicely? Will I even have hair? I was asked if I prefer wood or metal. Brown or black. Silver or gold handles. How do I want to be dressed? What kind of flowers and how many?

Who will be the preacher? The singer? Which songs? The obits, the death certificates, the pall-bearers, the cemetery plot. Whew! It would be so much simpler if my family could just dig a hole in the backyard. (That's more complicated than it sounds, by the way.)

I couldn't help seeing the irony

of spending so much time and money on my final appearance, considering I won't even be there. I'll be with my Lord and Savior, looking at the face of almighty God Himself.

That's when it dawned on me. Funerals are not for the dead. They are for the survivors. I thought back to the visitations I attended. Never once have I thought, "Gosh, they really cheaped out on that casket." In fact, most people probably never even spend more than a few seconds looking at the deceased. The rest of the time folks try to offer support to family and friends.

Unafraid

It's never particularly pleasant to ponder your own final arrangements, but for the believer one thing is sure: You don't have to be afraid of it. Psalm 56 states, "For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life."

Now those are words worth preserving.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Ken Lass is a retired Birmingham television news and sports anchor and an award-winning columnist for numerous publications and websites.

The role of old growth wood and church restoration

By Hamilton Richardson
The Alabama Baptist

Church restoration has become a useful way for many congregations to recover after a crisis such as a fire or flood, but one man has also uncovered an important aspect of the job that many may not have recognized before.

Jim Egan, who owns Egan Church Furnishing — a Shrewsbury, Massachusetts-based business originally started by his father in 1960 — has experience in church restoration but also in insurance claims.

It was Egan's experience researching old growth wood, restoring historical churches and working in the insurance industry that led him to realize what many pastors and church leaders are missing.

"In my experience with the insurance company that hired me to evaluate a claim on a historic church, when I told the pastor the damaged wood was old growth wood that is 10 times stronger than anything that can be purchased today, the insurance company got upset," Egan recalled.

"It was then I realized most pastors don't realize the value of their historic churches, and it's best to preserve the wood frames, pews and moldings."

Egan has been trying to spread the message wherever he can and

hopes to encourage church leaders to preserve their furnishings so that congregations can enjoy them for many years.

Durable, better option

"I am finding more pastors willing to keep old pews and restore their frames once we explain they can be restored and are much better than any wood that can be purchased today," Egan explained.

Old growth wood comes from trees grown naturally in virgin forests and can be over 200 years old.

It tends to be ideal for projects that call for a rustic quality to the wood, and it is also durable and more resistant to rot and warping.

Egan realized from his research that this kind of durable wood is better than any new wood product purchased.

For instance, "I just looked at a church that had new mahogany frames installed 17 years ago, and they are already splitting and need repairs," he said.

However, the 120-year-old wooden frames for the German stained-glass windows in a historic church in Manchester, New Hampshire, being relocated were in "excellent shape," Egan said. "I had never seen such old frames in such good shape."

For more information about old growth wood, church restoration and the services that Egan provides, visit eganchurchfurnishing.com.

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The next SPEAK Tour will be held Nov. 3 at First Baptist Church Flomaton.

For information, visit ymlink.org/speaktour or scan the code below with your smartphone's camera.



Admission is free, and no preregistration is required.

For more information, visit ymlink.org/speaktour.

Youth ministers lunch

YMlink would like to invite all Alabama youth ministers to enjoy a free lunch Nov. 12 during

the Alabama Baptist State Convention annual meeting.

This is a great time to get to know other youth ministers from across the state, be introduced to Baptist Campus Ministries and learn more about how YMlink can support and serve you in ministry.

The lunch will be held Nov. 12, 11:45 a.m.–1 p.m., at The Waterfront in Daphne.

To register, visit ymlink.org/calendar/youth-ministers-lunch.

To register, visit ymlink.org/calendar/youth-ministers-lunch or scan the code below with your smartphone's camera.



One-day event for Alabama Baptist senior adults

Abundant Living, a free event for senior adults, will be held Oct. 24 at Meadow Brook Baptist Church in Birmingham.

Frank Jones will provide pre-service music and lead congregational singing. Speakers will be Daniel Wilson and Danny Wood

with music provided by New Ground.

The event will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a break for lunch on your own from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The event is free. Registration is encouraged. Register at alsbom.org/abundantliving.

TAB CLASSIFIEDS

Place a classified ad below for \$1 per word.

For more information call 205-870-4720, ext. 200, or email ads@thealabamabaptist.org. To place an online classified ad for \$9.99/month, visit thealabamabaptist.org/classifieds.

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR

FBC Shawmut, located in Valley, Alabama, is a traditional church seeking a pastor who is a servant leader with vision, and passion for people, God's work and Word. The pastor should have a heart for evangelism and seek to grow and guide a small congregation needing revitalization. Send resumé to: sfbc.psc@yahoo.com.

PASTOR

Seventh St. Baptist Church Cullman, Alabama, seeking full-time pastor at our traditional church. Services Sunday and Wednesday. Cullman is a growing town with excellent schools, parks, shopping. Resumés to: pastorsearch7thst@gmail.com. seventhstbaptist.com

PASTOR

Pineview Baptist Church, Brent, Alabama, is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pineview Baptist Church, 10291 Highway 5, Brent, AL or email: pineviewbaptist@yahoo.com.

PASTOR

Bell Lane Baptist, Clanton, Alabama, is prayerfully seeking our next full-time pastor. The successful candidate will assume a range of responsibilities. You can view the full job description by following the link below: belllanebaptist.org/about.

PASTOR

Indian Grave Baptist Church is seeking a full-time/bivocational pastor. Please send a resumé to: IGPastorSearch@gmail.com or mail to: 2398 County Rd. 19 N, Prattville, AL 36067.

BIVOCATIONAL PASTOR

Paden Baptist Church, Gadsden, Alabama, is prayerfully seeking a bivocational pastor. Mail resumé to: Paden Baptist Church, 900 Padenreich Ave., Gadsden, AL 35903 or Bruce Ragland, Chairman, Search Committee at Padenbaptistchurch@yahoo.com.

PART-TIME ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Buhl Baptist is prayerfully seeking a part-time associate pastor. Please contact us for more information by emailing dmhicks630@gmail.com or BuhlBaptistChurch@gmail.com.

BIVOCATIONAL MUSIC MINISTER

New Center Baptist Church, Hartselle, Alabama, seeking mu-

sic minister for blended services, directing choir and coordinating volunteer musicians. Email resumé to: raykballew@gmail.com or contact 256-221-6880 and newcenterbaptist.org for more information.

PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC

South Luverne Baptist Church, Luverne, AL 36049. southluvernebc.com. Provides overall direction and vision of the worship and music program and provides spiritual leadership to the music staff and volunteers. Submit resumé to: jnorsworthy1141@gmail.com. Call 334-335-6885 for detailed job description.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF WORSHIP MINISTRY & SENIOR ADULTS

Mexia Baptist Church of Frisco City, Alabama, is seeking a full-time associate pastor of worship ministry and senior adults to lead all aspects of the church worship ministry, including children's choir. Applicants should have a bachelor's degree in a related field, and a seminary degree is preferred. Please submit resumé to: office@mexiabaptistchurch.com or call 251-575-4398.

BIVOCATIONAL ASSOCIATE PASTOR/YOUTH MINISTER

Moon Lake Baptist Church in Mentone, Alabama, is seeking a bivocational associate pastor/youth minister. Seminary students are welcome to apply. Direct resumé/questions to: beverly.haynes@yahoo.com.

NEXT GENERATION PASTOR

Calvary Baptist Church, Tusculumbia is seeking a full-time next generation pastor to lead our youth and children. Please send a resumé to: youth@calvarybaptisttuscumbia.com.

SIGNS

CHURCH SIGN

Signs are your first impression. What kind of impression is your church sign making? Call us to replace/update yours with either digital or traditional. Statewide since 1994. 1-800-729-6844 or 205-664-0955. www.reliablesigns.com

BUSINESS

CHURCH FURNISHINGS

Baptistries, portable baptistries

with wheels, church steeples, pew cushions, new pews, church pew reupholstering and restoration, wall crosses, stained glass windows. Call 478-275-0235 or email: info@superiorchurch.com. Website: www.superiorchurch.com.

TRAVEL/VACATION

NORTH CAROLINA VACATION HOME

Beautiful home on the crystal clear Hiawassee River in historic Hayesville, North Carolina. Vacation inquiries, call Tina 334-296-3930.

LOG CABIN RENTAL

Lake Guntersville area, beautiful view and fully furnished. Discounts to ministers. Log on to www.paradisevista.net to see pictures. Call for reservations at 205-540-3600.

RESOURCES

"HELP I'M A PASTOR!"

This new book by veteran Baptist pastor and cartoonist Joe McKeever is a resource pastors will want to keep on their shelf. And for those new to the pastorate, McKeever's insights will be a true gift. Order your copy straight from the author today for \$24.95. Email him at joe@joemckeeper.com, Venmo him at @Joe-McKeever-7 or send a check and your mailing address to: 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.

DISCIPLE-MAKING BOOT CAMP SET FOR OCT. 19

What if you could build a true disciple-making culture in your ministry? This is the purpose of D-Life. D-Life exists to equip common people to be Christ-like disciple makers. It's a proven plan for making disciples who make disciples — anytime and anywhere. As a result, ministries all over the world are using D-Life as a tool to equip and empower their people for a lifestyle of disciple-making. In a D-Life Boot Camp, we don't just talk about discipleship, but believers will learn how to make disciples who make disciples as a way of life. We will role play, share exciting stories and equip believers with a proven disciple-making process modeled after Jesus. Plan to attend the Central Alabama D-Life Boot Camp on Oct. 19 at NorthPark Baptist Church in Trussville. Register now at nponline.org/events.

CHRISTIAN Crossword



UPCOMING EVENTS
sponsored by the State Board of Missions

There's still time to give to the Myers-Mallory Offering

The 2024 Week of Prayer for State Missions may be over, but it's not too late to give to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering.

In fact, now is the perfect time, as thousands need assistance in the wake of recent hurricanes. The Myers-Mallory offering assists Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief efforts in places where people need help restarting their lives.

It also helps support Alabama Woman's Missionary Union, church planting, church revitalization and

For more information and resources, visit myers-mallory.org or scan the code below with your smartphone's camera.



partnership missions. For more information and resources, visit Myers-Mallory.org.

Library conference

Do you serve in a library of any kind — church, public or school? If so, you're invited to the North Alabama Library Conference on Nov. 2.

The conference will be held at Central Baptist Church in Decatur on Nov. 2, 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m. Ses-

sions include topics like classification, collection development, reading club ideas and Bible and book repair.

The event is free, and lunch is provided. To register contact Patty Easterling at 256-353-5912 or cbclibrarypatty@gmail.com.

Church Planter Network dinner and seminar day

Church planters and their wives and anyone else interested in Kingdom expansion are invited to a Church Planter Network dinner and seminar day Nov. 10–11.

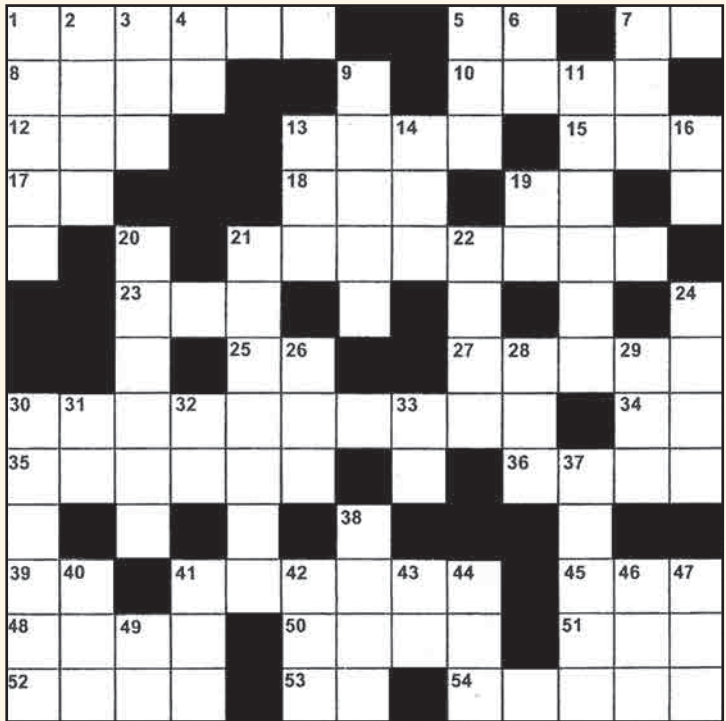
The dinner will be Nov.

10, 5–8 p.m., and the seminar day will be Nov. 11, 8 a.m.–12 p.m., at 3Circle Church, 10274 State Hwy 104, Fairhope, AL 36532.

To register for either of these events, visit plantalabama.org/events.

ACROSS

- Hannah's son. (1 Sam. 1:20)
- For ___ persecuted they the prophets. (Matt. 5:12)
- Spirit of the Lord came up ___ David. (1 Sam. 16:13)
- John also was baptizing in A ___ near to Salim. (John 3:23)
- The promise is ... to all that are ___ off. (Acts 2:39)
- An explosive.
- The ___ of God. (Ps. 46:4)
- A great ___ dragon. (Rev. 12:3)
- Whose son is ___? (Matt. 22:42)
- How long is it ___ since this came unto him? (Mark 9:21)
- Either/___.
- Hated.
- A little bear.
- ___ it not written? (Mark 11:17)
- I have never ___ any thing ... common. (Acts 10:14)
- That they might have life ... more ___. (John 10:10)
- To be ___ a certain place.
- The director ___ the play.
- A carnivore ___ meat.
- Printer's measure.
- Call for the elders of the ___. (James 5:14)
- A torn-up piece of material.
- The Thin Man's wife (Nick and ___).
- In ___ was there a voice heard. (Matt. 2:18)



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- Poetic for before. charity. (1 Cor. 13:13)
- Walked.
- I am (contraction).
- ___ them that love us in the faith. (Titus 3:15)
22. A spool of film.
24. Industrious insects.
26. He was ___ at that saying. (Mark 10:22)
28. Yes (nautical).
29. Sat down to ___ and to drink. (Ex. 32:6)
30. Slight variation in speech patterns.
31. Sheep's sound.
32. New Testament (abbr.).
33. ___ have and ___ hold.
37. ___ with thine adversary quickly. (Matt. 5:25)
38. Type of train.
40. Neither/___.
41. A heel.
42. Bezaleel the son of ___. (Ex. 38:22)
43. 900 in Roman numerals.
44. A witch is an old ___.
46. He is, they ___.
47. And so ___ them up out of the land. (Ex. 1:10)
49. Rosemary (nickname).

DOWN

- Belonging to Adam's son.
- English princess.
- A witty saying.
- United Nations (abbr.).
- Take no thought ... what ye shall ___. (Luke 12:11)
- A man ___ God.
- Metal from mining.
- He that is ___ days old. (Gen. 17:12)
- To capture a lawbreaker.
- A yellow car in New York City.
- Also.
- Authority to ___ these things. (Mark 11:28)
- Firstlings of thy herds ___ of thy flock. (Deut. 12:17)
- ___ not a servant unto his master. (Prov. 30:10)
- Now ___ faith, hope,

All Bible verses are KJV unless otherwise specified.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Sunday School Lessons

By Robert Olsen, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



For October 20

TOGETHER Acts 18:1–11, 18–21

Build Relationships (1–4)

After leaving Athens for Corinth, Paul encountered a Christian couple — Priscilla and Aquila. They, like Paul, were tentmakers by profession. On the Sabbath days, Paul would go to the synagogue to reason with the worshippers there, trying to convince them of the truth of the gospel. It is assumed that during the week, Paul worked at his profession.

This shows that quite often, ministry involves what is often considered mundane work; Paul had to have a job in order to support himself. But in God's Kingdom, there is no mundane work.

All work that we do, we do to the best of our ability for the glory of God. (See Col. 3:17, 23.) Many times in ministry today, pastors and missionaries have jobs aside from preaching and ministering to the congregation.

This allows the pastors to not have to worry about earning enough money from the congregation, but it also provides opportunities for ministry outside of the walls of the church. Historically, missionaries quite often had to have a trade in order to support themselves far from home. It is only since the 1800s that we began to see missionaries supported from their home country.

Share the Gospel (5–11)

Once Timothy and Silas arrived, Paul was able to devote all of his attention to preaching to the Jews in the city. Once the Jews became abusive, Paul turned his attention to the Gentiles. Through Paul's discussions and ministry, the synagogue ruler Crispus and his family were saved, as were many of the Corinthians.

This shows the value of dialogue. The internet has provided many good videos of Christians debating various non-Christians.

The arguments they make may not impact the one with whom they are debating, but these conversations are often invaluable for other believers who hear them and are encouraged.

They also provide answers to seekers who are looking for meaning in their lives, and hearing the gospel in contrast to the opposing view can lead them to accept the gospel.

When we share the gospel or have meaningful Christian conversations with others, even if we don't see any impact, we do not know who might be around to hear.

This should be an encouragement to us that God uses our circumstances in the lives of others even when we don't see it. It should encourage us to be diligent in living in a godly manner with seasoned speech to help others see the power of the gospel.

Follow God's Lead (18–21)

Paul left for Ephesus along with Aquila and Priscilla, who probably came to the city for business purposes. Once they arrived, Paul went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews. They were interested in carrying on the conversation into the following days, but Paul needed to leave for Caesarea and said he would come back later if it was God's will.

It is interesting to note how Paul did not remain to speak with the Jews further because he apparently had other business to take care of. There are times in our lives when we have to trust the providence of God. God is the One who saves; it is our job to be ready to share the gospel when and where we can.

Sometimes we may have a gospel conversation with someone and then have to leave, never seeing them again. We must do what we can in our circumstances and hope that the conversation we had helps move the person to accept the gospel.

For October 27

MOTIVES Acts 19:11–20

God's Power (11–12)

For his third missionary journey, Paul went back to Ephesus and encouraged believers along the way. While in Ephesus, many miracles were performed through Paul so that even items like handkerchiefs that touched Paul were able to be used to heal the sick and cast out demons.

Sometimes we see people peddling "holy items" on TV commercials that say that if you purchase the item, blessings will come. Don't be fooled by this. God's power is available to all Christians because the Holy Spirit resides in believers.

In Paul's day — before the Gentiles had access to Scripture — God would use other means to show His power. These items were not special because of Paul but because of God's choice to use them as a means to spread the word about His power.

Today, we don't need these items because we have the Word of God, and power comes through the gospel in His Word. As Christians we need to focus on sharing the gospel through God's Word, not through trinkets and gimmicks. Although God uses miracles today, particularly in areas that do not have Christian influence — and He is free to use His power however He sees fit — we know that there is power in the gospel, and we need to focus on preaching this.

False Motives (13–16)

The power of God was made known by a group of exorcists, the seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva. They realized that Paul's power came from Jesus, so they decided to try to cast out a demon using the "Jesus that Paul preaches." The demon-possessed

man replied, "I know Jesus and I recognize Paul — but who are you?" The man then proceeded to beat the men so brutally that they ran from the house naked and bleeding! Word of this filled the local people with fear, and Jesus' name was held in high esteem.

The problem with the sons of Sceva was that they were not true believers. The Holy Spirit did not reside in them, and so the demon had no fear of them.

This is a lesson for us. We do not need to fear demons since they cannot harm us. In addition, God is not Someone who can be used for personal glory or gain. This applies to exorcisms as much as it does to preachers who use a prosperity gospel to swindle money from believers to pad their own pockets.

God's Authority (17–20)

On account of the demon attack, many locals were filled with fear. Recognizing the power of Jesus' name, many sorcerers and magicians burned their scrolls and books and some became Christians.

This event isn't exclusive to the Book of Acts. There are many accounts of witch doctors and shamans, upon realizing that God is more powerful than the demons they serve, switching their allegiance to God. Similarly, we ought to recognize God's power in our own lives.

We often are filled with anxiety over our health, bills, politics and international events, but God is in control of all of these things. It is essential that we give our anxieties and fears over to God and realize that "God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). We need to recognize God's power over all things so that we find contentment in God, not in our circumstances.

*"And fear fell upon them all,
and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled."*

Acts 19:17

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Sunday School Lessons

Adjunct Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

By Teman Knight, Ph.D.



For October 20

ABRAM AND LOT: FAMILY RIGHTS Genesis 13:5–11, 14–18

Today's society is filled with individuals concerned with advancing their personal agendas and asserting their rights. Many are looking after their own interests, unconcerned about how that may impact other people. Selfishness impacts our relationships, especially with our families.

Sadly, I have seen families torn apart by conflict over a possession that different members feel is their right to inherit. Abram demonstrated for us that sometimes the best option is simply to put aside our own interests and let the other person "win."

Relationships are more important than possessions or getting what is owed to us. When we put aside our self-interest, we can receive the greater benefit of preserving and even strengthening the relationship.

Personal rights and possessions can be a source of conflict. (5–8)

God had greatly blessed Abram and his nephew Lot. They had acquired many possessions, cattle and servants. They had outgrown the land's ability to provide for the needs of all that they had acquired. Here we see that growth and expansion can have its own set of challenges.

Abram could have asserted his rights as the family leader to make sure that his flock was cared for first, but he instead demonstrated his priority of the family relationship. Abram sought to keep peace "since we are relatives." Remember from our previous lesson that God values relationships. We are to love God and neighbor.

Place the needs of others before your own. (9–11)

Abram demonstrates his peacemaking skills and humility

by allowing Lot to choose first. This demonstrates the humble servant that we as believers are to strive to be. "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather for the interests of others. Adopt the same attitude as that of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:3–5).

This attitude is vital with both our families at home and our church families.

Lot seized the opportunity to choose the whole plain of Jordan and settled by the city of Sodom. Nothing in our text demonstrates that Lot sought God's will for his decision in any way.

The wickedness of the city and its reputation for sinning against God was never even considered by Lot. Our life choices are crucial. Every decision we make can move us closer to wickedness or closer to God.

Trust God with the outcome. (14–18)

Abram moved to live in the land of Canaan. God was obviously pleased with Abram's peacekeeping and humility. God reminded Abram that all of the land that he could see would belong to him and his descendants. This included the land where Lot and his clan settled. God sent Abram on a walking tour of the whole land, repeating His promise to give all the land to Abram's descendants.

After Abram moved his tents to the new location, he built an altar and worshipped God. This was a common practice for Abram when he relocated. The few times we do not read about Abram pitching his tents and then building an altar to worship God are the occasions when Abram fell into sin.

Our personal worship and walk with God are key to resisting sin. Abram's personal worship enabled him to trust God in this difficult family conflict.

For October 27

ISAAC AND REBEKAH: FAMILY FAVORITES Genesis 25:24–28; 27:5–13

We are called to love God and each other. Loving one person does not impact our ability to love someone else. When our first grandchild was born, I thought I could never love any other child that much.

After five grandchildren, I still find that I have plenty of love in my heart for each of them. I tell my students that it is OK for their church members to love a former pastor because they can love them both. If the new pastor honors the former pastor, their people will love them both more because of it.

When Isaac was 40 years old, Abraham sent his servant to find Isaac a wife. With God's help the servant was able to find Rebekah, and she and Isaac were married.

After 29 years of barrenness, Rebekah became pregnant with twins. God told her that she had two nations inside of her and the older one would serve the younger one. This foreshadowed the struggle that was to come.

Playing favorites is out of place in the family. (25:24–28)

The first son was born looking red and very hairy. He was named Esau, which means "hairy." His descendants would become the nation of Edom, which means "red." The younger son was born grasping his brother's heel. He was named Jacob, which means "heel-catcher." This term was used to convey the idea of a trickster or con man.

Esau grew up to be an outdoorsman and a hunter. His dad loved this because he enjoyed the taste of wild game. Jacob, on the other hand, was more of a stay-at-home person. He was described as a quiet man. The word in Hebrew is often translated as "complete" or "blameless" and is used in Job 1:8 to describe Job. Re-

bekah loved Jacob perhaps because he stayed home, or perhaps she was influenced by God's words to her before they were born. Isaac and Rebekah each favoring one son over the other set up a family dynamic that led to heartache. Favoritism can be especially destructive when it finds its way into the church or family.

Deception is out of place in the family. (27:5–10)

The blessing of the birthright was extremely important. The birthright involved a double portion of the inheritance and leadership of the tribe, including spiritual leadership.

Esau demonstrated that he was unworthy of this position of leadership when he traded the birthright for a bowl of stew. Isaac was about 137 years old at this point, and although he lived to be 180, he acted like he would die very soon.

His impatience to give Esau the blessing suggests that he was following his own plans, not God's will. Rebekah's and Jacob's impatience is demonstrated by their plotting and deception. God had promised that Jacob would lead, but they were unwilling to wait for God to orchestrate His plan.

Encouraging others to sin is out of place in the family. (11–13)

Jacob was concerned about the consequences if Isaac realized the deception. Rebekah was willing to take the blame if that happened, but we are not able to protect another from the consequences of sin. Rebekah's sin cost her and Jacob when he followed her lead. This created division in the family and would force Jacob to flee and live away from her for the rest of her life.

EDITOR'S NOTE — The Sunday School lesson outlines are provided by Lifeway.

***"Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game,
but Rebekah loved Jacob."***

Genesis 25:28

WORD search

- ABEL
ADAM
ANGRY
BIRTH
BLOOD
BROTHER
BUILT
CAIN
CHILD
CITY
CRYING
- CURSED
DESCENDANTS
DESIRE
DOWNCAST
EAST
EVE
FAVOR
FIELD
FLOCK
FORGIVENESS
FRUIT
- GROUND
KILL
LORD
MARK
MASTER
NOD
OFFERING
PROTECTION
PUNISHMENT
SIN
WANDERER

M B R E R E D N A W B T Y M M
J W D F J Q T D I T L N Y H B
C J C L T N V S X S O H F J T
M U Q K N L I L A M O F O R D
N D R K Q O P A B E D T R R E
D K P S K W D Z C Z B B G O S
L W Q B E Q V K Z N R D I F C
I L T N T D T Q J O M R V F E
H B K W V T T N T C P O E E N
C R Y I N G Q H M R M L N R D
M A S T E R E A O D T C E I A
G L N R E R D T E K F K S N N
K D L Y V A E S B R V L S G T
H L T V E C I Q O I N L O F S
X I L K T R M V T G R N T C M
C H R I E C A L V R V T G X K
K A O V K F D E L G X V H P F
M N A N G R Y B F I E L D R N
D N U O R G K A M B B R U K W
M T N E M H S I N U P I H K K
M L X V D T L I U B T N L Q P
N F R Z G T S A C N W O D C R

Then [the Lord] said, "What have you done?
Your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground!"

GENESIS 4:10



You Gotta' Hear This!

Glimpses of God in the everyday moments

Another day older and deeper in debt

I'm often reminded that I'm getting older. A cashier at a Japanese restaurant once leaned over the counter and said to me, "I'll bet you were pretty when you were young." My doctor, dentist and pharmacist have all used the unwelcome phrases that begin, "For a woman your age —" or "As we get older —." Even my youngest grandson once chimed in. His mother's father had died recently, and Ty was having a difficult time. His mom asked if I would talk to him.

I found Ty in the family room watching TV, so I plopped down on a beanbag by him (big mistake). I comforted him by saying, "Your granddad is out of pain now. He has a new body and can run and do the athletic things he enjoyed." He dried up his tears and seemed to feel better.

New knees in heaven

When I started to get up, I saw I needed help. "Ty, give me a hand and help your Gram get up from this beanbag. These old knees don't work like they once did."

"Gram, that's all right; you'll get new ones in heaven before long," he replied.

Old age also comes with a few perks, beginning with senior discounts. Here are some others:

1. We can speak our minds more freely. I can share the gospel openly without fear of being excluded or rejected. Those things become less important as I seek to "bear fruit in old age" (Ps. 92:14).
2. We have accumulated some

knowledge and hopefully wisdom.

When asked by family or friends, we can share what we've learned from experience.

3. We have more time to pray for people. When someone asks me to pray for them, I've learned to throw my arm around that person and pray for them on the spot. (I might forget if I wait.)

4. You learn your prayers will be answered in God's time (Luke 1:13, 24).

5. As we are getting closer to the end of our lives, heaven looks sweeter, and God removes our dread of death (Gen. 15:15).

Perhaps my greatest reassurance as I age comes in Isaiah 46:4: "Even to your old age, I am He, And even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; Even I will carry, and will deliver you."

I am truly indebted to the "old folks" who have gone before me — family, friends, my church heroes of faith — all those who have paved my way spiritually.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Barbara Eubanks of Albertville is an author, conference speaker, Christian humorist and retired English teacher. She is the widow of Baptist pastor Steve Eubanks.



MEDIA REVIEWS

By Steve Potts
The Alabama Baptist

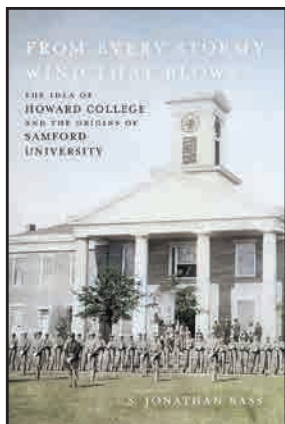
Book reviews: Exploring history of Samford, Scripture, sermons on sin

From Every Stormy Wind That Blows: The Idea of Howard College and the Origins of Samford University

By S. Jonathan Bass
LSU Press, 2024

In his new book, “From Every Stormy Wind That Blows,” Samford University history professor and university historian S. Jonathan Bass gives readers a journey into the past as he unfolds the story of the university’s founding.

James Harvey DeVotie, a revivalist Baptist pastor originally from New York, was serving Siloam Baptist Church in Marion and saw the need for a men’s college that would emulate such successful women’s colleges as Marion Female Seminary and Judson Female Institute. He, along with the new board of trustees and support from the Alabama Baptist State Convention,



chose the name Howard College in honor of John Howard, a deceased British philanthropist. The new college got off to a modest start in 1842 with Samuel Sterling Sherman as its first president.

Bass traces the key moments in Samford’s history: the ups and downs of Howard College through the Civil War and Reconstruction; the influential role of Col. James Murfee in rebuilding the school following the war; its move to Birmingham in 1887; the admission of the first female student in the 1890s; the college’s second move in 1957; and its renaming in 1965.

Bass’ book is more than the story of an institution; it is the unfolding narrative of Christian faithfulness through many generations.

Whether one is a graduate of Samford or simply interested in the history of Alabama and Alabama Baptists, this is a book that gives inspiration and appreciation for a heritage not to be forgotten.

Whatever Became of Sin? A Search for the Answer

By Bill Keith

Stonegate Publishing, 2022

Is there an absence of understanding about the issue of sin in our society? Is there a lack of preaching about sin in the Church? Bill Keith sees the answer to both intertwined, and his answer is a strong “yes.”

Keith lays out his case in “Whatever Became of Sin?” Inspired by the 1973 book by Karl Menninger of the same title, Keith updates the subject and focuses not on secular psychiatry — as did Menninger — but on the teaching of Scripture.

Keith, author of more than 20 books, served as a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan and is a former newspaper editor.

His chapters examine the neces-

sity of facing what God says about sin. He quotes numerous Christian leaders like Adrian Rogers, W.A. Criswell, Michael Horton, Albert Mohler and others as he traces the subject of sin in biblical contexts and contemporary culture. Topics include sexual immorality and pornography, the loss of truth and honesty, the LGBTQ+ challenge, abortion, drunkenness and gambling.

He challenges readers and leaders to be clear about sin and its consequences, as well as the forgiving grace of God. This is a book that teachers and preachers will find full of memorable material for teaching and illustration. Every reader will be challenged to consider sin in an urgent and biblical manner.

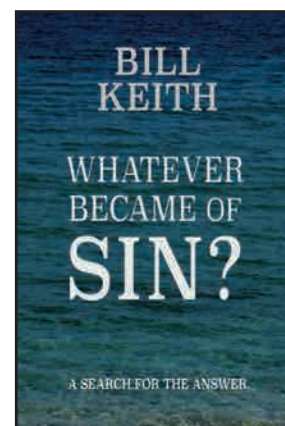
The Book That Conquered Time: How the Bible Came to Be

By Rob Suggs

Whitaker House, 2023

The story of the Bible and how it became the book we know today is fascinating and complicated. Large volumes have been written about the authority, inspiration, canonicity and translation of Scripture.

Rob Suggs gives the reader a handy primer that covers the highlights of the whole story in a concise and understandable way in “The Book That Conquered Time:



How the Bible Came to Be.”

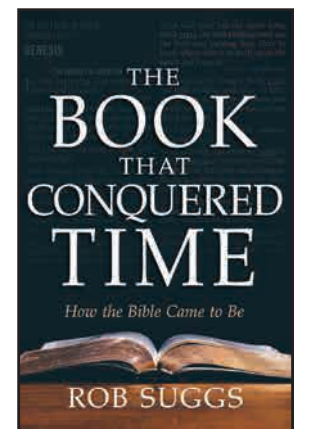
Suggs, a native of Atlanta, has written or helped write more than 60 books. He worked as a senior editor of Walk Through the Bible Ministries and has contributed cartoons to many publications.

His book is well written and full of helpful explanations about how God inspired the Old and New testaments and how language and writing contributed to the development of the text. Suggs explains the Greek translation of the Old Testament — called the Septuagint — which was so influential during New Testament times and shows how the early church gathered together the inspired writings of the apostles and others. He deals with how the official canon of Scripture came to be recognized, and he notes various non-biblical writings that were important in the era after the New Testament was written.

Suggs surveys the role of the Bible in history, especially noting its impact on the Reformation and how that led to translating Scripture into the languages of many cultures. He traces the development of English Bible translations and notes the role of the King James Version.

Suggs also shows the differences in the philosophy of translation that undergird various modern translations.

For anyone interested in understanding the story of “how the Bible came to be,” this is an excellent resource.



EDITOR’S NOTE

Reviews of films, books, music or other media that appear in TAB are intended to help readers evaluate current media for themselves, their children and grandchildren in order to decide whether to watch, read or listen. Reviews are not an endorsement by the writer or TAB Media.

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Decision time

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Disaster Relief teams at 'right place' after floods in South Carolina

Mark Presswood said Mr. Addison was standing out by his mailbox in Walterboro, South Carolina, when Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers came to assess his neighbor's property for flood damage.

Mr. Addison didn't have any damage, so he didn't need help from their crews.

But Presswood thought he might need a friend.

"We went over to talk to him, and he was telling us how old he was," Presswood said of the 90 year old. "I said, 'There comes a time when we all die; when you die, do you want to go to Heaven?' And he said, 'I hope so.'"

'It's about time I did that'

Presswood, an ABDR chaplain and associational missions director for Clarke Baptist Association, told Mr. Addison that the Bible "says you can know that."

"I walked him through Romans and said, 'Would you like to know? Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved,'" Presswood said.

He said Mr. Addison prayed sincerely, and after he prayed, said, "You know, it's about time I did that."

Presswood said he would always remember those words.

"God had us in the right place at the right time," he said.

In the days since, he's been back to follow up with Mr. Addison and took him a book about how to take your first steps as a new follower of Christ.

'Heart wrenching' needs

David Hendon, the ABDR white hat leader on site in Walterboro,



Photo courtesy of Mark Presswood
ABDR chaplains Mark Presswood (left) and Doug Clark (right) met Mr. Addison (center) while out assessing flood damage in South Carolina and led him to faith in Christ.

said volunteers are getting a lot of opportunities to plan for future follow up and enlist local churches in helping.

They've been working to clean out flooded homes and treat them to prevent mold after flooding caused by Hurricane Debby on Aug. 3.

"Our assessors are still out trying to go down roads that were too wet before, and as they do, they're meeting people with some extraordinary circumstances," Hendon said.

"It's sad; many of them don't know what they're going to do."

One was a young single woman expecting a baby.

"The world is crashing in on her, and it's been heart wrenching for assessors to see the situation she's in," Hendon said.

But he said they've been able to connect her with a local church that

has already started mobilizing to help out at her house and walk with her through this.

Another homeowner — a man with a terminal illness — told disaster relief volunteers that he felt very alone.

In addition to that, his back porch was crumbling from the floods, and that was the place where he liked to spend time outside.

Relying on churches

"A church is going to rebuild that for him," Hendon said.

In both homeowners' cases, Hendon said he and other ABDR volunteers are "hoping that out of this comes a group of believers who will go in and take them under their wing and help them through this time and build them up and be an encouragement to them."

Since they arrived in the Walterboro area, teams from Baldwin and

Clarke Baptist associations have completed about six mud-out jobs in flooded homes.

These jobs are time-consuming, Hendon said — some of them take more than a day.

Ongoing effort

A team from St. Clair Baptist Association arrived to help out Aug. 20 along with a feeding crew from Birmingham Metro Baptist Association.

"Having more teams come in will be very helpful," Hendon said, noting that at the moment they still have more than 20 job requests they're responsible for, and they expect to get more. "

Work here is wide open for sure."

To contribute to Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief efforts, visit sbdr.org/give.

Visit sbdr.org to find out about future trainings or how to volunteer.

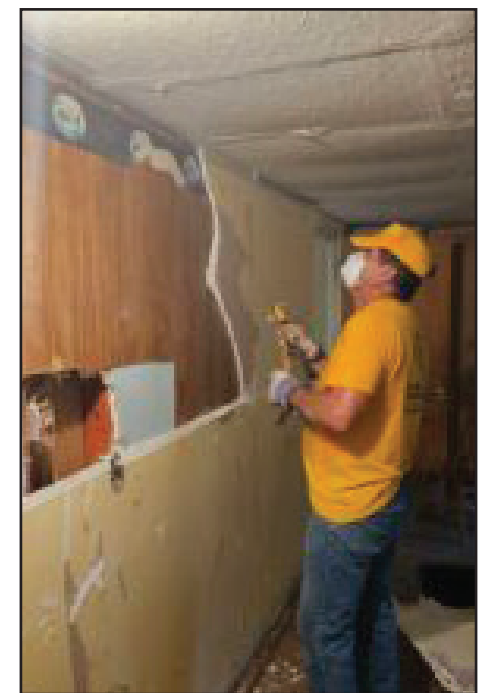
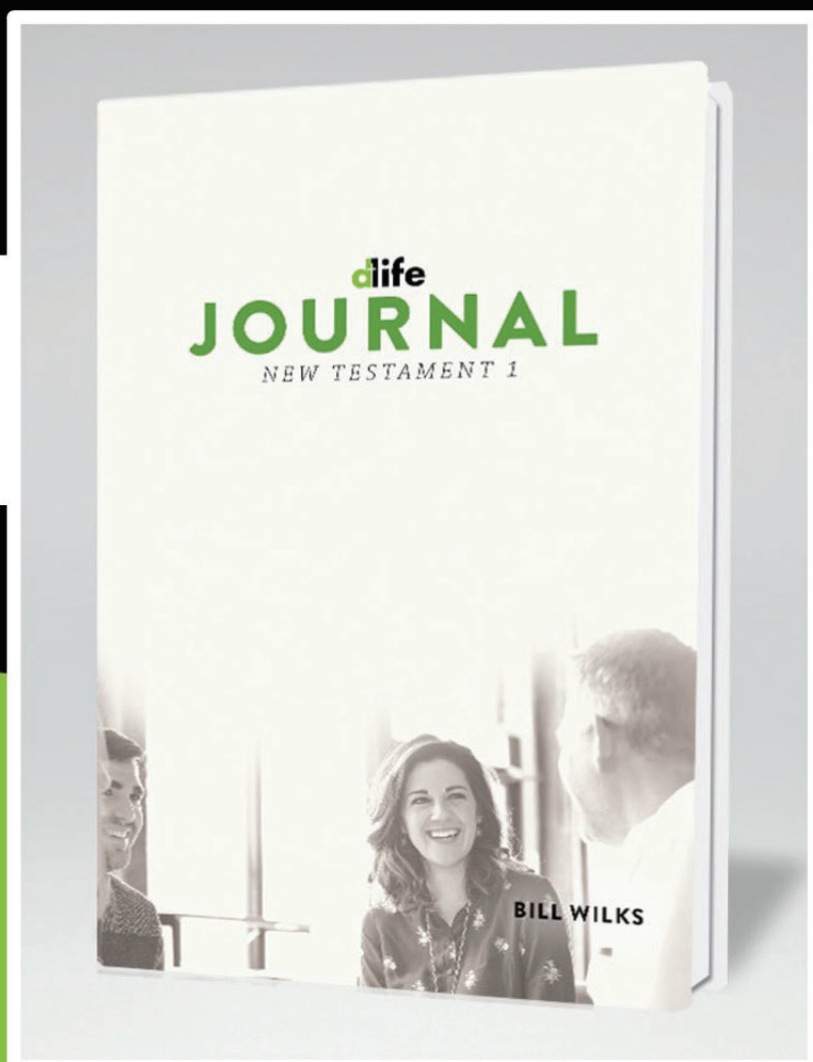


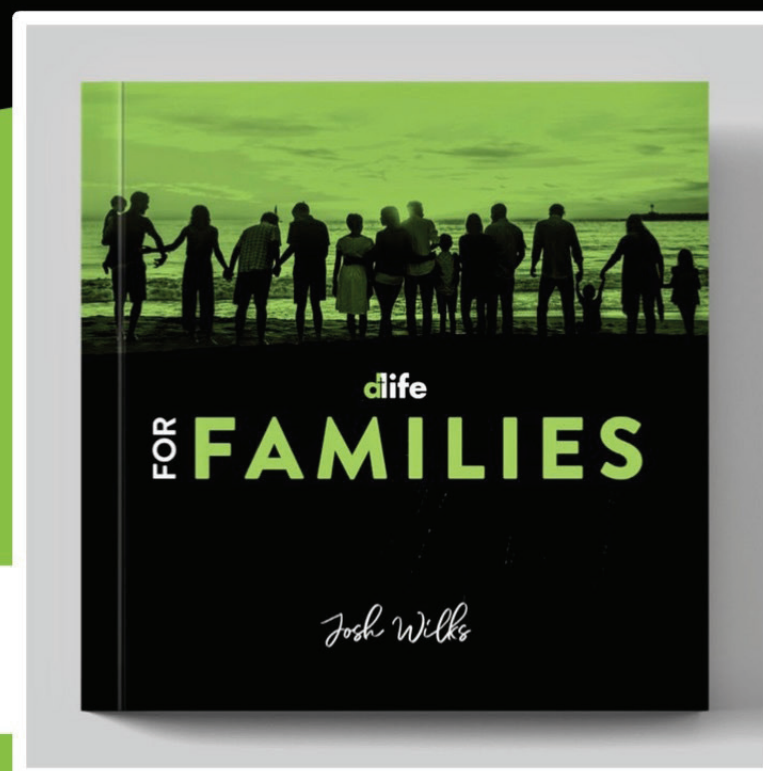
Photo courtesy of Steve Brooks
Baldwin, Clarke and St. Clair Baptist association teams have been doing mud-out jobs in South Carolina.

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Joining 'in the redeeming'

By University of Mobile

UM president welcomes incoming students to 'sacred place'

The University of Mobile is not just a beautiful, special and sacred place — it is a place that will change you, said UM's new president, Charles Smith, during President's Commissioning on Aug. 16.

"For decades now, thousands of men and women have driven up the drive behind you and left changed," Smith told nearly 300 incoming students and their families gathered on the university's Great Commission Lawn.

The event is the first of a two-part Great Commission Tradition that bookends each student's college journey.

At President's Commissioning, new students touch the Great Commission Globe in the center of the Great Commission Lawn to symbolize the start of their college career.

Years later at commencement, they touch the globe again as new graduates to signify the next step in their journey, entering a worldwide mission field to pursue their calling for the glory of God and the good of the world.

Your first missions field

Following a time of worship led by UM's "Worship Collective" student ensemble, Smith called on new students to embrace the journey ahead and make the most of their time at college — to lean in, try hard, make friends, serve, learn and lead.

With Matthew 28:18–20 — the Great Commission — as his theme, Smith said tUM calls students to serve others and share the hope of the gospel with them — "but only if that is truly your hope."



University of Mobile photo

The University of Mobile welcomes new students for Fall Semester 2024. Charles Smith, the university's new president, welcomed the students Aug. 16 during the President's Commissioning held on the Great Commission Lawn.

"Your first mission field may be your own heart.

"How might God be calling you to trust and follow Him? How might this season serve to strengthen your faith?" he asked.

God's ambassadors

UM prepares graduates, Smith noted, for meaningful careers while also challenging them to see the world as it really is, through a biblical worldview.

"It is a world that God created. A

world filled with men and women who bear his image and are called to steward their God-given gifts.

"A world broken by our sin, filled with people who walk in darkness and need God's truth, love and restoration.

"It is a world that God loves, where He sent His Son to us to live the life we couldn't and die the death we deserve, so that in Him we might be reconciled to God and received into heaven and released

into the world as His ambassadors.

"One of the most remarkable things about the Christian faith is that God not only saves us, He invites us into His family, and commissions us — the redeemed — to join him in the redeeming," Smith said.

Classes started Aug. 19 for students enrolled in over 75 academic programs at the Baptist university leading to associate, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

For more information about the University of Mobile, visit umobile.edu or call Enrollment Services at 251-442-2222.

"Your first mission field may be your own heart. How might God be calling you to trust and follow Him?"

Charles Smith
president, University of Mobile

EDITOR'S NOTE — This story was written by Kathy Dean and originally published by the University of Mobile.

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Contacting the Source

By Tracy Riggs Frontz
The Alabama Baptist

Musical duo offers message of purpose in ‘grand story’

Artificial intelligence has become a buzzword in technology circles and a subject of reflection across social, cultural and faith-based spheres. “Hello Human,” the title song from Apollo LTD’s latest album, was written to address the concept of AI while emphasizing that humans have inherent value as image bearers of God.

“There’s something different about the human touch and the human voice and what He has created,” said Adam Stark, singer-songwriter, instrumentalist and producer for Apollo LTD. “We have a lot in our world that is synthetic and that is artificial.

“We’re in this almost crisis of trying to discern what’s real, true, touched by a human fingerprint, and what’s been artificially synthesized. Sometimes it’s getting hard to tell the difference right now.”

Apollo LTD’s message wasn’t something that the band sat down and decided to focus on, but looking back, Stark has realized they want to show that everyone has value, that God sees them and that they have purpose.

‘You have a value’

“With that, we want to celebrate joyfully. Apollo has been celebrating and infusing joy into our art. You have a value and let’s find your way in this life because we have it abundantly if you want,” Stark said.

Initially, Apollo didn’t plan to be in the faith music industry.

“Though we were believers the whole time and every song we’ve ever written has been life through that lens, the way God wrote our



Photo by Joshua Wurzelbacher

APOLLO LTD

story — He put the right people and the right partners in place. We like to say He kind of kicked us in the back door of Christian music. He was like, ‘Hey, I want you over here,’” Stark said.

God had been preparing Stark for this ministry his whole life.

Growing up in Nashville in a musical home surrounded by his professional musician father and two musically inclined older brothers, Stark started playing piano very young.

He decided as a teen that he wanted a career in music, and his dad encouraged Stark to follow his heart.

He also warned him it would be difficult.

Stark chose Belmont University, a Christian university in Nashville, due to its strong musical program. He eventually obtained a business administration degree, combining

high-level music classes with the commerce skills he would need as a professional musician.

His father was correct; the early years weren’t easy. Stark sometimes worked three part-time jobs while performing wherever and whenever he could, but he continued to be up for the challenge.

He had met his bandmate, Jordan Phillips, when they were both assigned to the same dormitory room as freshmen. But it wasn’t until the latter years of college that they decided to work together.

At first, they simply wrote music for others. They worked well as a team and started a band but, as often happens with college bands, it didn’t last long.

‘Incredible journey’

After that ending, they didn’t have a set agenda for their next step. Then more and more people

started asking them if they were a band. This made them ask themselves, “Are we?” They decided to form Apollo LTD and see if God wanted to do anything with it.

“We’ve been really blessed that He did. It’s been an incredible journey up to this point. ... I think God had plans for us that we didn’t see quite yet.”

Reaching high

Apollo LTD was named after the space program and its goal of reaching out and stretching for what had never been done before.

Though based out of the Christian market, Apollo LTD has a message for nonbelievers.

“Joy is attractive to nonbelievers — especially to those who feel hopeless — the idea that there’s hope, there’s a future for you. You have a reason and a purpose. You’ve been very specifically made.

“I think that’s an attractive message to anybody,” Stark continued. “They just need to realize the ‘why’ behind it. The gospel is just woven into everything. It’s there; people just don’t see it all the time. But I think that overarching truth is always going to resonate in the hearts of humans. Then it’s just a matter of pointing it to the Source.

“Just to see the way God is weaving a story together. ... His ways are bigger than mine. What we do is a very small role in the grand story of what God is writing. It’s just been a joy to use our art and use our band in His story. It’s exciting, and we’re glad to see what He’s going to do with it next.”

To find out more about Apollo LTD go to weareapollo ltd.com.