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WORD & WAY

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Home, University Respond in Convention LEGAL BATTLE

By Brian Kaylor
Word&Way Editor

The Baptist Home and Missouri Baptist University submitted legal responses on Jan. 31 to urge a judge to dismiss motions for summary judgment filed by the Missouri Baptist Convention on Dec. 2. The MBC requested the Court rule in its favor without a trial, claiming its 2016 victory in the case against the Missouri Baptist Foundation should serve as precedent in the cases against the Home and MBU. However, the institutions rebut the MBC's claim that their cases are "nearly identical" to that of the Foundation's case.

The MBC originally filed suit in August 2002 against the Foundation, the Home, MBU, Windermere Baptist Conference Center and Word&Way. The boards of all five had taken action in 2000 or 2001 to self-elect their trustees rather than accept those elected by messengers to the MBC annual meeting each year. The circuit court ruled in favor of Windermere in 2008, a decision the appeals court upheld in 2009. The MBC voluntarily withdrew its claims against Word&Way a year later.

A new judge, Karl DeMarce, was assigned to the case on Jan. 30, the day before the filings by the Home and MBC. Since the cases differ from each other, so do many of the arguments made by the two institutions.

THE BAPTIST HOME ARGUMENTS

The Home argues there are important differences between the Foundation case and their own, especially since they were different types of corporations under Missouri statutes. The Home notes that prior to the charter changes in 2000 and 2001, TBH was the same type of entity as Windermere, but not the Foundation. The different corporation statutes include different rules governing the process for

charter changes. The Home thus cites Windermere's victory as one of the cases that should serve as a precedent.

The Home also argues the "plaintiffs are not entitled to Summary Judgment, as a matter of law, as they lack standing" since "they were not members of the corporation." The filing explains that TBH's 1960 Articles of Amendment declared "the corporation's trustees were the sole members of the corporation."

"The principle stated in *Windermere* likewise controls here," the filing notes with another reference to the MBC's loss in the case against Windermere. "The 1960 Articles identified the corporation's trustees as the 'sole members' of the corporation without further qualification. Accordingly, Plaintiffs lack the status of a member of the Home under the corporate articles upon which they rely."

The Home also notes the MBC does "not and cannot allege that they own, or have ever owned, any property associated with" the Home. The Home's final argument notes that the provision requiring MBC approval of charter changes was not actually allowed under state law in 1960, making it "an invalid and unenforceable provision." The Home adds that the provision remains "void *ab initio*" (null from the beginning) and the Home took no action to enact the privilege after state law allowed such provisions in 1995.

MISSOURI BAPTIST UNIVERSITY ARGUMENTS

MBU argues its trustees in 2001 "owed a fiduciary duty to the University" and thus acted appropriately when "faced with the MBC's actions in disobeying the governing rules and years of past practice in the trustee

nomination process." MBU explains the MBC's nominating committee "breached the MBC's Nominating Rules and Bylaws" and the MBC's "own Constitution, Bylaws and other governing documents" with the creation of new guidelines in 2001. MBU therefore contends the MBC's actions "constituted a breach of fiduciary duty," showed a "lack of good faith and fair dealings" and made the MBC "the first to breach any agreement with the University."

"The MBC's arguments are not only legally incorrect, but also very dangerous to nonprofit charities who may have similar charter provision setting forth a third party to approve any charter amendment," MBU's filing adds.

MBU also emphasizes that trustees in 2001 held concerns that "the MBC's actions in usurping the trustee nomination process could also put at risk the accreditation of the University, which would be catastrophic to the University." MBU claims this risk can be seen in a later effort by the MBC to "intervene in the educational programs of another MBC educational agency, William Jewel College." After launching an investigation into Jewell, the MBC defunded the school in 2003.

Like the Home, MBU notes it was governed by a different Missouri corporation statute than the Foundation was prior to the charter changes. MBU is the same type of entity as the Home and Windermere. MBU also argues the MBC cannot win a motion for summary judgment since it failed to negate several affirmative defenses previously made by MBU.

On Feb. 14, the MBC filed for an extension of time to respond to the arguments made by the Home and MBU. ◀◀

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LETTER

from the editor

Brian Kaylor

OUR FINEST MOMENTS

Seventy-five years ago — as our nation's leaders shamefully interned more than 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent — Baptist missionaries

instead shared the love of Jesus. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an executive order on Feb. 19, 1942 that excluded Japanese Americans from the West Coast. The next month, he created the War Relocation Authority that forcibly moved people to spend the next three years in internment camps in Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming and elsewhere.

Despite the president's orders, Baptist missionaries urged Americans following the attacks on Pearl Harbor to keep sharing God's love to Japanese people. The Feb. 26, 1942 issue of *Word&Way* included a piece by George Sadler of the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) urging Americans to avoid "two dangers": the temptation to give into fear and the temptation to stop loving one's enemies. He urged Southern Baptists to pray for the people of Japan since "our Saviour has not deserted Japan and Germany and Italy."

Sadler also recounted the history of Baptist work in Japan and noted that one missionary — Maxfield Garrott — even chose to stay in Japan as "a living testimony" to "our Japanese Baptist brethren and sisters" that "Southern Baptists have not deserted them." Garrott eventually returned to the U.S. two years later — and started ministering to Japanese Americans

interned in Arkansas. After the war, he resumed his work in Japan. The Oct. 1, 1942 issue of *Word&Way* noted the Foreign Mission Board provided Bibles to Japanese pastors in the internment camps.

Missionaries with the Northern Baptist Convention (now American Baptist

istering — even to those deemed "alien enemies." Yet ministering to interned Japanese Americans in the 1940s was not the exception, but the normal practice of Baptist missionaries. As a new film shows, missionaries in Nigeria in 1966 risked their own lives to save others as genocidal

violence swirled around them (see pages 16-17). Missionaries in each generation have ministered to refugees and those suffering from persecution, famine or other hardships. Missionaries represent our finest moments and remind us who Christ's love compels us to be in the world.

Seventy-five years after World War II, some governmental voices again urge us to fear those who do not look like us. These voices want us to exclude the "aliens." Our missionaries once again show that

Christ's love transcends national borders and ethnic differences. Politicians may not wish to welcome refugees, but missionaries show a better way. Cooperative Baptist missionaries like Chaouki and Maha Boulous in Lebanon. American Baptist missionaries like Larry Stanton in Serbia. Southern Baptist missionaries like Layla Murphy in Southeast Asia. Others continue to welcome refugees in our nation (see pages 8-9). We are at our best when we follow the spirit of these missionaries, not the dictates of those who preach fear and hate.

►► Brian Kaylor is editor of *Word&Way*.



brianKaylor

In the midst of a nation giving into fear and losing sight of its moral principles, Baptist missionaries kept ministering.

Churches USA) also ministered in the camps, renting nearby homes so they could serve those forced to live behind barbed wire. One missionary traveled 56 times between Seattle and a camp in Idaho about 700 miles away to retrieve belongings of interned families who had only been allowed to bring what they could carry. The missionaries also helped Japanese American families restart their lives after being released from the camps with little money and often no home to which they could return. "A Church Stands with its People," a short film by the American Baptist Home Mission Societies on this topic, can be watched online: youtu.be/q4tY2zZxuIs.

In the midst of a nation giving into fear and losing sight of its moral principles, Baptist missionaries kept min-

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Christina Fournier
Farmington, Mo.

I commend you for the variety of news items you are choosing for the Word&Way. I am, however, most distressed over the Calvary Baptist Church, D.C., article to call a gay couple as co-pastors (Word&Way, Feb. 2017). Understanding that Baptist church policy is independent of a denominational governing body, is it wise for any church leader (who will be held to a higher standard in the Judgement) never to confront two individuals with their separation from God by their chosen sin? I find no mention of the biblical prohibition of homosexuality from Calvary Baptist Church. For the church to state that there is no need for an individual to “sacrifice sexual identity over a life of faith” once again points up our country’s ongoing acquiescence to certain behaviors as legal, although morally wrong.

Got an opinion? Send us your letter to the editor:
editor@wordandway.org or Editor,
PO Box 1771, Jefferson City MO 65102-1771.

BAPTISTS JOIN EFFORT URGING TRUMP ACTION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

On Feb. 1, the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative sent a letter asking President Donald Trump to quickly nominate an Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom. More than 715 people — including many Baptists — signed the letter urging a nomination for the position within Trump’s first 100 days in office, which will last until April 29. The diplomatic office for international religious freedom, vacant since Trump assumed office on Jan. 20, was created by a congressional bill first introduced by Republican Representative Frank Wolf and signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1998.

“By nominating an Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom in your first 100 days you can signal your commitment to people of faith and freedom of conscience, in a way that requires no new taxes and no new legislation while strengthening highly effective offices,” the letter notes.

“As the first nation to constitutionally guarantee religious freedom, the United States has a great history of standing for this ‘first freedom’ around the world, a right closely tied to other human rights, economics and security,” the letter adds. “Your swift

action in this regard would extend American leadership in this most critical of issues at this most pressing of times.”

Among the Baptists signing the letter: Elijah Brown, general secretary of the North American Baptist Fellowship; Jim Hill, executive director of Churchnet; Brian Kaylor, editor & president of Word&Way; Molly Marshall, president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Shawnee, Kan.; Todd Still, dean of Baylor University’s George W. Truett Theological Seminary; and Suzii Paynter, executive coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. More than 60 other leaders at Baptist churches, associations, schools and organizations also signed.

Rabbi David Saperstein, the ambassador from 2014 until the end of President Barack Obama’s term, was the first non-Christian to hold the post. The first ambassador, Robert Seiple, previously served as president of the Baptist-affiliated Eastern University and Palmer Theological Seminary. He served from 1999-2001. Suzan Johnson Cook, another Baptist, served as the ambassador from 2011-2013. She previously became the first

black female pastor within the American Baptist Churches USA.

Obama did not nominate someone for this diplomatic post until nearly 17 months after taking office — and then a Republican senator blocked the nomination for several months. Trump’s team is reportedly already vetting candidates. Among those rumored on the shortlist are former Baylor University President Ken Starr and former Liberty University Senior Vice President for Communications Johnnie Moore Jr. ◀◀



NEWS BRIEFS

AVERAGE US CLERGY AGE INCREASES

New research by the Barna Group documents the changing face of U.S. clergy. Over the past 25 years, the median age of senior pastors jumped from 44 to 54 years. Only one in seven pastors is under 40, with the majority over 60. Fifty years ago, most pastors were under 45. The report suggests the increase came as pastors live and minister longer and as fewer people in younger generations enter pastoral ministry. The average tenure of a pastor jumped from four years in 1992 to ten years. During the last 25 years, the number of women pastors tripled to nine percent. While pastors reported higher levels of marital and parental satisfaction than the general population, they reported higher levels of feeling isolation as they struggle to make friends. Other findings: half of pastors reported facing depression, one-fifth reported struggling with an addiction and one-quarter reported doubting their faith at some point during their ministry. Barna interviewed more than 14,000 pastors from more than 40 Protestant denominations for its “State of Pastors” report.

TRUMP REVIVES PIPELINE ON SACRED LAND

Two recent actions by President Donald Trump authorized the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline to run under the Missouri River and through land considered sacred by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Trump’s Jan. 24 and Feb. 7 actions expedited the process and prematurely ended an environmental impact assessment and a public comment period. Sioux leaders have filed multiple lawsuits, including a Feb. 9 filing making a claim under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. That suit argues the pipeline would substantially impact “tribal members’ free exercise of their religion.”



More than 7,000 people gathered last fall at the Oceti Sakowin camp in North Dakota to show solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. (Emily McFarlan Miller/Religion News Service)

U.S. PROTESTANT MINISTERS TARGETED IN TURKEY

Turkish authorities have accused at least two U.S. pastors in the nation of holding ties with the group the Turkish government claims launched an unsuccessful coup in July. Since the coup, more than 40,000 individuals have been detained, including thousands of soldiers, judges and teachers. Authorities detained Andrew Brunson, a native of North Carolina serving in Turkey for 23 years, in early October. He pastors Izmir Resurrection Church (an Evangelical Presbyterian Church) in the city known in biblical times as Smyrna. His wife, Norine, was initially also detained, but released two weeks later. Andrew spent two months in a detention center before being sent to a prison in early December, where he remained more than two months later. The day after the detention of the Brunsons, authorities deported another U.S. minister serving in Turkey. As Ryan Keating attempted to return to Turkey after a trip to the U. K., he was detained overnight at the Istanbul airport, sent back to London and banned from Turkey for life. In addition to pursuing doctoral studies in Turkey, Keating worked at Kurtulus Church in Ankara, where he also assisted the church’s ministry to thousands of Syrian refugees. Non-Muslims account for less than 1 percent of Turkey’s population. The Alliance of Baptist Churches in Turkey includes four churches.

NEW DEAD SEA SCROLLS CAVE FOUND — WITHOUT SCROLLS

For the first time in over six decades, archaeologists discovered a Dead Sea Scrolls cave — although this cave no longer contained the scrolls. After a Bedouin shepherd discovered a cave in 1947, ten other caves with scrolls were found by 1956. The caves included nearly 1,000 manuscripts mostly from the time between the 3rd Century

B.C. and the 1st Century A.D., including the oldest copies of many biblical texts. Now researchers have found a 12th cave. In addition to shards of pottery storage jars, leather to tie scrolls together, flint tools



A scroll fragment of Ecclesiastes found in Qumran Cave 4 and now on display in Amman, Jordan. (Brian Kaylor/Word&Way)

and arrowheads, the archaeologists found one unbroken storage jar with an unused scroll. It is believed looters took the scrolls and other items from the cave sometime in the middle of the 20th Century.

EVANGELICAL LEADERS PICK TOP 2017 POLICY ISSUES

The National Association of Evangelicals quizzed evangelical leaders across the country on what issues should be considered the top policy areas to prioritize in 2017. Religious freedom topped the list with mentions from 63 percent of the survey participants, which included leaders of denominations, universities, publishers and other organizations. Immigration/refugees came in second as 46 percent of the leaders picked that topic. Other issues receiving votes included poverty, abortion, racial tension, court nominations, marriage/family and health care.

STUDY SHOWS FAITH-BASED RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

A study released Feb. 1 by Baylor University’s Institute for Studies of Religion shows faith-based groups provide 58 percent of emergency shelter beds for homeless persons. Cities with a higher percentage of beds provided by faith-based groups also saw a lower percentage of homeless persons not staying in shelters. The study’s authors examined data in 11 large cities, including Denver, Col., Indianapolis, Ind., and Omaha, Neb. The study found faith-based groups focus on issues beyond just housing to reach symptoms of homelessness. The study also showed that faith-based residential recovery and job readiness programs in the 11 cities saved taxpayers an estimated \$119 million in savings over three years. Such programs put faith-based organizations at “the forefront of program innovation and organizational transformation for improving positive outcomes for the homeless individuals and families.”

BAPTISTS IN AZERBAIJAN ARRESTED, FINED

Officials in the Central Asian nation of Azerbaijan fined two Baptists in the former Soviet bloc nation for holding worship services without state permission. On Saturday, Nov. 26, about 10 uniformed police officers and several other individuals raided a prayer gathering in the home of Baptists Hamid and Hinayat Shabanov in the city of Aliabad. Police detained and questioned 26 individuals for several hours. On Dec. 12, police again summoned the 26, at which point two — Hamid Shabanov and Mehman Agamammadov — were charged for “violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches and other religious ceremonies.” In a 15-minute hearing held that day, a judge found both men guilty and gave them the minimum fine of 1,500 manats (or about \$773). Although the men were charged with holding an unregistered worship service, the government has repeatedly denied registration efforts over the last two decades. Shabanov, the congregation’s pastor, has been arrested on several occasions, leading to several fines and time in prison. About 96 percent of the nation’s 9.8 million people are Muslim. According to the Baptist World Alliance, the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Azerbaijan includes 22 churches with about 3,000 members.

IMB TRUSTEE RESIGNS OVER RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ADVOCACY

A trustee of the Southern Baptist Convention’s International Mission Board announced his resignation in January to protest the IMB’s support of the religious liberty rights of New Jersey Muslims. Last May, the IMB joined the SBC’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and other groups to file a court brief supporting the Islamic Society of Basking Ridge, which was denied a construction permit by city officials. After a federal judge ruled in favor of the ISBR — and affirmingly cited the IMB’s brief — Dean Haun quit the board. The pastor of First Baptist Church in Morristown, Tenn., Haun previously served as president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He told the Baptist and Reflector in Tennessee that trustees were not informed of the decision to sign the brief. He also criticized efforts to support the religious liberty rights of “a false

religion.” His church is now escrowing its Cooperative Program gifts. The IMB says it signed the brief because it supports religious freedom for all people, adding the brief gives the IMB credibility when lobbying foreign governments for religious liberty rights of Christian minorities. Following Haun’s resignation, IMB President David Platt told Baptist Press they are revising their process to in the future only sign briefs “directly tied to our mission.” Platt also apologized for “how distracting and divisive this has been.”

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE RECOVERING FROM TORNADO

Students at William Carey University, a Baptist school in Hattiesburg, Miss., returned to campus to start the spring semester just one month after a tornado ripped through the campus. The Jan. 21 EF-3 tornado injured several students and damaged nearly every building, including five that will be demolished. Since the storm hit on a weekend, many of the college’s 4,400 students were not on campus or even in town when the tornado struck during the winter trimester. After the tornado, most classes switched to an online format to finish the winter term, with other classes meeting at the University of Southern Mississippi or in local churches.

BAPTIST NOMINATED FOR U.S. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

President Donald Trump on Jan. 18 nominated former Georgia Governor Sonny

Perdue to serve as the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Perdue is expected to receive Senate confirmation. While governor, Perdue spoke at the 2008 Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant meeting in Atlanta, which former President Jimmy Carter spearheaded. Often outspoken about his faith, Perdue attends Second Baptist Church in

Warner Robins, Ga., where his son, Jim, serves as pastor.

Trump previously nominated a Baptist as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Scott Pruitt, Oklahoma’s Attorney General since 2011, is a member of First Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, Okla., and a trustee for Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Senate voted 52-46 to confirm him on Feb. 17. Environmentalists opposed him because of his history of suing the EPA and past statements downplaying climate change.

ERLC HIRES FORMER TENN. GOP LEADER BAPTIST LEADER

The Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission hired a former Republican leader in Tennessee as its strategic partnerships director. Brent Leatherwood, a deacon at an SBC church in Nashville, Tenn., served as executive director of the Tennessee Republican Party for four years. He left the position in December when he failed in his bid to be elected the state party’s chairman. Leatherwood faced criticism from some Republicans for not offering stronger support for Republican Donald Trump. The ERLC’s president, Russell Moore, remained an outspoken critic of Trump throughout the primary and general election campaigns. Several state and national Republican leaders praised the ERLC for hiring Leatherwood.



Missouri Baptist University President Alton Lacey starred with his wife, Pat, in a campus performance of “Love Letters.” The two played childhood friends sending birthday notes, vacation postcards and more over 50 years, discussing hopes, dreams, ambitions, frustrations triumphs and losses. The Laceys performed the former Broadway play on Feb. 10-11. (Photo courtesy of MBU)

Midwest Baptists Welcome Refugees into Communities

By Brian Kaylor
Word&Way Editor

President Donald Trump signed a controversial executive order on Jan. 27 halting all refugee resettlement and barring entrance for anyone from seven predominately-Muslim nations. Several judges across the country blocked full implementation of the order. As the political and judicial conflict grew, Baptists in the Midwest — like many Christians across the nation — kept doing what they were already doing — welcoming refugees.

“To know that God has called us to go to the nations to preach the word and to see that he’s bringing the nations straight to us is incredible!” said Chris Douglas, who is leaving his position as associate pastor for youth at First Baptist Church in Villa

wonderful people with the love of Christ,” added Douglas. “Our faith has been challenged to reach beyond the border of our comfort zone to see the fertile ground that is all around us as we see refugees being reached with the power of the Holy Spirit.”

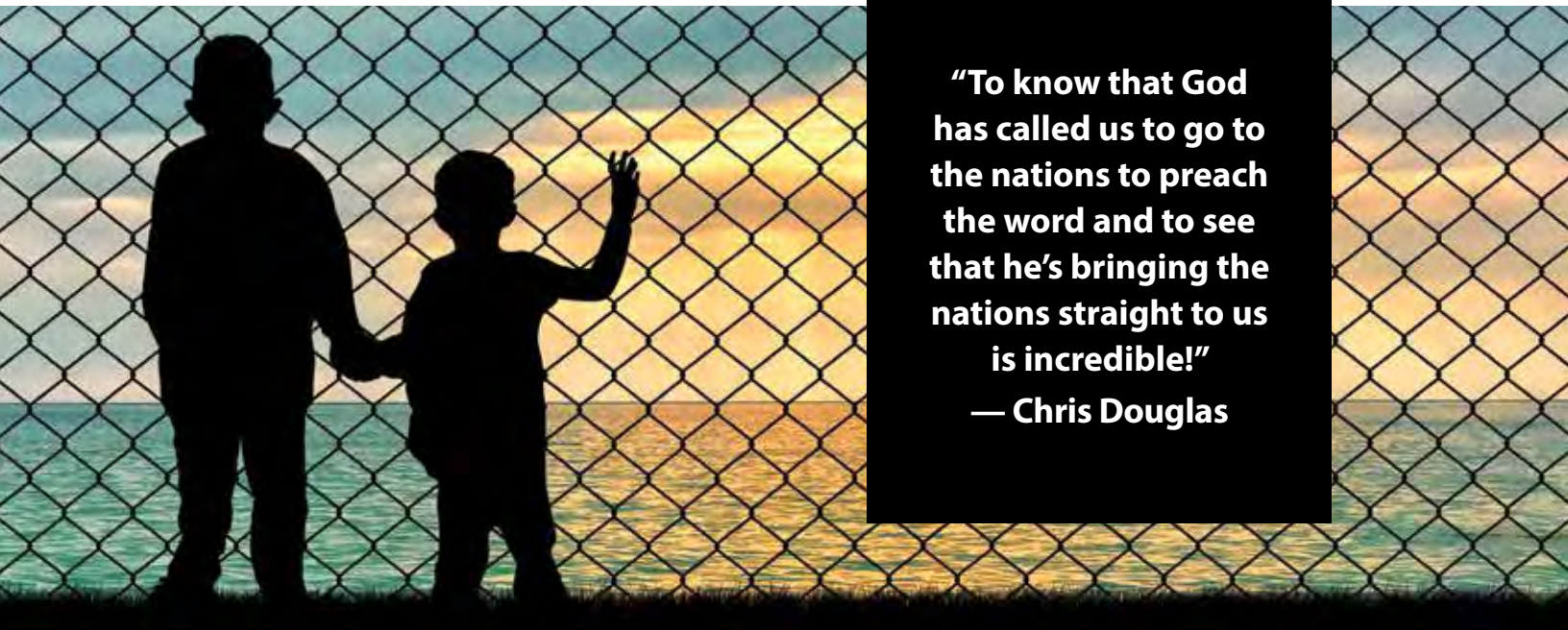
Douglas led his youth group to volunteer with Oasis as a way to engage in missions. The youth delivered furniture, clothes and other items donated by church members for refugee families new to the St. Louis area. Oasis has served over 3,000 refugees from 33 different countries.

“The majority of families we helped happened to be of the Muslim faith,” Douglas noted. “We were sure to tell each family that the items donated were from

songs” with “a former Muslim who was face-to-face with ISIS and is now a follower of Christ.”

Ben Schisler, associate student and missions pastor at First Baptist Church in Arnold, Mo., has also been involved with Oasis. Members from their church have helped furnish homes and make electrical or other improvements. The church also holds an eyeglass clinic twice a year, offering free eye exams and glasses to refugees in St. Louis. Schisler noted that too often what we know about refugees is what “we see in the news and they’re in the distance.”

“We almost demonize them by focusing on how it will cost us or hurt us,” he added. “But then you meet the people, you get to



**“To know that God
has called us to go to
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that he’s bringing the
nations straight to us
is incredible!”
— Chris Douglas**

Ridge, Mo., to work at Oasis International, an organization that ministers to refugees in the greater St. Louis area. Douglas, who is raising support for his new position, will start at Oasis in May.

“Where it’s near impossible for most Christians to bring the gospel to these locations is Syria and Iraq, God is bringing them on our front door step giving us an amazing opportunity to engage these

Jesus. Most of the families even allowed us to pray for them before we left their home.”

Douglas recounted meeting one refugee from Iraq who fled to Lebanon after ISIS attacked his family in their home. Eventually the man and his wife and son came to the U.S., where the man experienced a dream of Jesus, started to read the Bible and then converted. Douglas added “it was a bit overwhelming” to be “singing worship

know their background, you get to see their needs and you see they are really just people and just trying take care of their families.”

Schisler insisted “we’re called to love” refugees and that meeting them as people — not as stories in the news — helps.

“It helps us to love them and see them as more than just a number or a problem,” he explained. “It broadens your perspective to the call of Jesus to the church to go to

the nations and to reach out beyond what we're comfortable doing and embrace people who are different from us."

Marlene Po, an immigrant from Burma, agrees that churches can play an important role in helping refugees transition to the United States. Po serves as director of the FOUNDATIONS Judson Communities, a theological educational program of Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Shawnee, Kan., for people from Burma.

"The first thing churches can do is to assure newcomers that they are loved and

welcomed by their new community," she explained. "Churches and ministers need to take the initiative in making sure the immigrant population in their community feels at home."

"The second thing churches can do is to create opportunities in which newcomers and immigrants can learn more about how things work in the United States," she added. "Many immigrants have limited knowledge of how things are done in America. That is, many newcomers are unfamiliar with how health care works,

how education works, etc."

Helping churches play this kind of role with refugees is what Douglas will soon do at Oasis through the "Good Neighbor Initiative," which is a goal to connect every refugee family with a U.S. Christian family. The families visit each other homes, share meals together and build relationships — just like good neighbors. ◀◀

Note: Learn more about Oasis International at oasis4refugees.org or by emailing Chris Douglas at ctdouglas@gmail.com.



Youth from First Baptist Church in Villa Ridge help move furniture into a home for refugees. (Chris Douglas)



Snowcones at an Oasis community picnic, which also includes food, games, face paintings, cotton candy and live Christian music. (Chris Douglas)



Kids enjoy soccer during an Oasis community picnic. (Chris Douglas)

Some Responses to President Trump's Jan. 27 Executive Order Halting Refugee Resettlement

"Any attempt to ban Muslim refugees based on their religion betrays our values and sends the un-American message that there are second-class faiths. Our country, founded by immigrants who established religious freedom as a bedrock principle, is better than this."

— **Amanda Tyler**, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty

"As a Fellowship, our churches and field personnel stand with refugees and immigrants here in the United States and around the world, spreading hope and offering comfort in a world that all too often offers hate and fear over peace and welcome."

— **Suzii Paynter**, executive coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

"Southern Baptists are among the many Americans living in majority-Mus-

lim countries to carry out the biblical call to love their neighbors. We are deeply concerned that the order will cause widespread diplomatic fallout with the Muslim world, putting Southern Baptists serving in these countries in grave danger and preventing them from serving refugees and others who are in need with humanitarian assistance and the love of the gospel."

— **Russell Moore**, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission

"The BWA decries recent actions by the United States Government to issue a blanket travel ban on seven countries that specifically targets refugees and that seems to especially affect Muslims. ...there is a temptation to give in to fear and to hastily pursue misguided policies that will have deleterious long-term effects and that undermine freedom of religion."

— **Baptist World Alliance**

WILLIAM JEWELL COLLEGE, SECOND BAPTIST LIBERTY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS IN THAILAND

By Carolyn Tomlin
for Word&Way

*Sunday worship in
the mountaintop
village of Huay Ngoo
Palaung. (William
Jewell College)*



Last November, faculty and students at William Jewell College and Second Baptist Church in Liberty, Mo., made a commitment to “Get Stronger” by strengthening their global presence. Through this collaborative effort, they realized a need in Thailand and Myanmar to aid immigrants and refugees in southeast Asia. In January, five members of Second Baptist and two William Jewell students traveled to Thailand to take the next step.

The team of seven men learned about the services of the Upland Holistic Development Project and visited three Hill Tribe villages. Founded in 1996 by Rick

Burnett, the foundation of UHDP is based upon a Christian perspective of “Creation Care,” employing a church-based outreach to the Hill Tribe Villages. This approach includes three areas:

1. **Environmental Emphasis** — crop rotation, soil management, limited pesticides or herbicides, seed banks, agroforestry
2. **Human Rights** — advocates for citizenship matters, fair trade growers
3. **Economic** — holistic family-based income diversity, financial management workshops, food security

A connection to UHDP came from Second Baptist Senior Pastor Jason

Edwards and his wife, Christy, who served in Thailand several years ago as field personnel for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Edwards traveled with the team in January, along with Mike Lassiter, associate pastor of community care and missions at Second Baptist.

“Our church likes to partner locally,” Lassiter said. “We are building a relationship with a Karen congregation that meets at Grace Baptist Church in Gladstone. The Karen are a large ethnic group that has emigrated to northern Thailand and to the U.S. out of Myanmar in recent years due to religious persecution and human rights issues. William Jewell provides a ‘Journey



**A woman
sorts rice
beans, which
brings in
28 baht
(less than a
dollar) per
kilogram of
seeds.
(William Jew-
ell College)**



Teamwork is required for building an aquaponics system by making a sustainable raft from bamboo plants. The raft is being tested on a pond. (William Jewell College)

Grant' to students for experiential learning trips."

Jeff Buscher, chaplain at William Jewell and a member of the January team, spoke of the impact on students who were part

of that team.

"Biology majors Daniel Bittel and Christian Wyatt expressed the value of being immersed in another culture," says Buscher. "They were inspired by the work being done by our partners at UHDP and also by the tenacity and the resourcefulness of the Hill Tribe people we were able to visit. They affirmed the importance of engaging other cultures in ways that are empowering to the people with whom we partner."

Prior to the trip, physics students completed projects related to solar lighting and solar resources for the village. These were donated to the UHDP campus for use in rural settings. Blane Baker, professor of physics at William Jewell, led Bittel, Wyatt and other students to build an aquaponics system at a Village Partner school in Urban Kansas City. This experience provided the skills needed to construct the system for the UHDP center in Thailand.

According to Baker, the villager's main priorities are sanitation, water resources and food. The village of Toong Kwang Tong is located on land that was originally rice paddles. With sand filtration, water is accessible for washing clothes and bathing. However, further testing is needed to ensure that safe drinking water is available.

William Jewell and Second Baptist plan to return to continue partnering with UHDP.

"Our church plans a longtime partnership with the college that includes a focus on women and needs of the Thailand people," Lassiter said. "Other exploration trips are in the works also." ◀◀

Carolyn Tomlin is co-author of "The Secret Holocaust Diaries: The Untold Story of Nonna Bannister" and teaches the Boot Camp for Christian Writers.

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NEWSLETTER

March 2017

AMEN, Say The Nicaraguans

Touchdown at Augusto C. Sandino International Airport in Managua launched our vision casting work with the Nica leadership. Until liftoff for home, God's work among us was so evident. We were privileged to have on that plane an outstanding strategic mind, Michael Graves, NorthBridge Church, Springfield.

This event began shaping in January 2016. The Nica leadership had asked us to help build a national eldercare team to multiply leadership and resources to serve the churches.

Only Haiti is poorer than Nicaragua in the Americas. Some argue that Nicaragua is actually poorer. A little over six million persons call Nicaragua home with 305,000 over the age of 65 or five percent of the population. If one counts those 55 and over, meaning near the post-working years, that number climbs to 650,000 or ten percent of the population. Forty-two percent of the citizenry live in extreme poverty. Sixty

percent of all Nica live in the capital of Managua and other urban centers and on the west side of the country. The average salary is between \$305-\$420 per month with the value of their currency continuing to decline year by year.

As the hand-selected team of pastors expressed holy hope for focusing on the eldercare issues in the churches and communities those churches serve, they reveled in what could be. The team learned of the ministry of The Baptist Home. We learned of Nicaragua and those issues that would affect how they would do their best work.

The Nica spent some tough time carving out a vision statement for their team's ministry. In English, the acrostic is AMEN. In Spanish, the phrase is **A**ncianos **M**inistrados por el **E**vangelio en **N**icaragua, translated *Elders Ministered by the Gospel in Nicaragua*.

The Nica team in November 2016 had given The Baptist Home Foundation

their sense of the greatest needs of the elderly they knew from daily ministry. We explored those together to organize and determine what they saw as their most critical.

In a final work session, we asked the Nica to choose their first, most

achievable, projects to get started on the vision. They did just that, and all affirmed the process and result. Each of the groups had created projects that provided an order to accomplishment, building on the previous one.

So much appreciation was expressed for The Baptist Home Foundation's leadership in walking with them through this process. While one of our favorite things to do, for them it was new, exciting, challenging. They learned process. They listed all the resources (human, material, financial) inside the country they could call on to help them. They said "yes" we can do this.

There was no crying, no whining, no hint of negativity about anything. They saw the work of the Holy Spirit going before them to guide as they worshipped. The room, although filled with many denominational affiliations, were unified in their purpose as they had been when they walked in, with no hint of competition or criticism.

On the plane home to the United States, my mind and heart pondered why we American believers can't be more like our Nica friends. Just watch what God will do with them...

Photos and information provided by Dr. Roger Hatfield who serves as the Global Aging Missions Specialist for The Baptist Home.



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E-Z PROPHETS

By Brian Kaylor
Word&Way Editor

Payday and car title loan shops dot the landscape of cities across the country — but especially in Missouri. Often called “predatory lending” institutions due to the large interest rates charged on those desperate for a little cash, the average interest and fee rates on such loans in Missouri sits at a 450 percent Annual Percentage Rate with the cap set at 1,950 percent APR. The state is home to more payday lenders than McDonald’s, Starbucks and Walmart locations — combined. A one-mile stretch of Missouri Boulevard in Jefferson City, Mo., includes a dozen payday or car title loan shops.

Other Midwestern states do not fare much better as the average APRs in Illinois and Nebraska also top 400 percent while Iowa, Kansas and Oklahoma have average rates of more than 300 percent. With these rates, the average payday loan recipient quickly pays more in fees and interest than the principal for the average loan of just a few hundred dollars. Most payday loan recipients take out several additional loans as they need a new loan to pay off the previous one. A loan of a few hundred dollars can quickly lead to thousands of dollars in payments without even paying off the principal.

In this environment, Baptists and other Christians are speaking out for reforms and regulations. LifeWay Research in 2016 found that 86 percent of Christians believe laws and regulation should prevent loans with “excessive interest rates.” Additionally, 77 percent called it a “sin” to give a loan that causes the borrower financial harm. It might seem easy to preach against such an economic injustice, but political factors stand opposed to reforms. Seventeen states — including Arkansas — fight predatory lending with two-digit interest rate caps. Yet in Missouri and federally, attempts to lower caps or pass other regulations often fail as the payday loan industry pours money into the coffers of politicians or into political and legal battles against citizen ballot initiatives.

The issue of predatory lending unites diverse Baptists together. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention and the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. have joined together with other faith-based groups to advocate for just lending. Payday lending is the primary focus on CBF’s advocacy efforts with advocacy outreach specialists working on it in Florida, Kentucky, South Carolina, Texas and nationally.

A 2014 SBC resolution “on predatory payday lending” declared that Southern Baptists “denounce the practice of predatory payday lending as contrary to God’s design for human relationships.” Messengers also urged those in the payday lending industry “to consider the great damage they are causing in the lives of vulnerable people” and called on government leaders “to investigate current payday lending abuses in their communities and institute just regulations and policies that terminate the practice of predatory payday lending.”

A 2015 NBC, USA resolution on “predatory lending” noted the denomination stands “against practices of predatory, debt-trap lending and exploitation of financially vulnerable households.” The resolution also endorsed a cap on fees, interest and other charges at 36 percent APR. The resolution noted black and other minority neighborhoods are particularly targeted by predatory lending institutions.

Southern Baptist preacher R. G. Lee became famous in the mid-20th Century for his “Payday Someday” sermon warning of divine judgment. Baptists are now uniting across denominational, racial and other lines to warn the payday loan industry that there will be a payday someday. ◀◀



Hope

By **Brian Kaylor**
Word&Way Editor

ADVANCE

“Payday Advance.”

“No Credit Necessary.”

The signs flash on multiple blocks in nearly each community, like neon gods demanding attention and respect. The promises hide economic exploitation and political inaction. Yet in this darkness, churches are responding with an alternative message, a sign of hope.

“Several of us were already thinking about what could be done to help the working poor in our community,” explains Danny Chisholm, senior pastor at University Heights Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo. “One Sunday I preached on Luke 4 about Jesus ‘bringing good news to the

“There’s a lot of shame that comes with taking out payday loans and people lose hope that they will ever get out of debt.”

poor’ and challenged our church to think about how we could do that. As several of us attended Faith Voices of Southwest Missouri meetings, we

learned about the payday loan industry and decided this would be our focus.”

Chisholm and others from University Heights visited with politicians and urged reforms. However, the congregation also decided to take a practical action to help people in the community right away. Launching a new ministry called “University Hope,” the church created a fund in partnership with a local credit union. People trapped in the cycle of payday or car title loans can work with the church to receive a loan with a minimal interest rate. The loan pays off the payday loan debt and comes with a reasonable monthly payment that ends the debt trap.

One of the first individuals assisted by the program received a \$573 loan to finally end a nearly two-year-old \$500 payday loan for which the family had paid thousands of dollars in interest. Their monthly fees dropped from hundreds of dollars — for which they had to keep borrowing to pay — to just \$18. Since the loans are backed by the fund created by University Heights, those receiving the loans do not need to pass a credit check. With over \$20,000 given to the fund, more than 35 people have been helped by University Hope loans since its inception near the end of 2015.



Danny Chisholm

“I’ve been amazed at the response,” Chisholm said. “It’s been good to raise awareness through the media attention we’ve received. We have had other faith orga-

nizations offer support for this effort and it’s been especially gratifying to find local and city leaders recognize that payday loan companies need regulation. Our City Council recently passed a resolution to encourage the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to pursue regulations on payday/title loan companies.”

Earlier this year, Second Baptist Church in Liberty, Mo., launched its own program modeled on University Hope. Bob Perry, a member of University Heights who assists with the University Hope program met with leaders at Second Baptist to help them as they created “Second Hope” with more than \$12,000 and a partnership with a local credit union. Both programs include a vetting process to ensure people receiving loans

can repay within one year and connect loan recipients with a mentor for encouragement and budgeting guidance.

Harold Phillips, a member of Second Baptist and a city councilman in Liberty, said he gained awareness about the problem of predatory lending through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship’s “focus on payday lending reform as part of their advocacy focus.” Phillips, a longtime coordinator for CBF Heartland, continues to serve CBF Heartland as church benefits advocate.

“Our plan was simple,” Phillips explained. “With church approval, I asked about 12 people to consider making a gift that would create a collateral pool and a savings account of \$6,000. We then sought out a local credit union to partner with us — we set up a savings account with them, we do the interviewing and if the team decides the person has the resources to repay the loan over time they talk with the credit union which makes the loan. We have a group of mentors and encouragers who work with each family. In that process, they may discover other ways local resources can assist the family.”

Phillips said “Second Hope is not really solving the payday loan/predatory lending problem” since “in a major way, that needs to happen with Congress in D.C. and with our elected leaders in Jefferson City.” However, he added that it “is providing an incredible help to families one at a time.”

“While Second Hope will not change the world, it is proving to be an encouraging hope for three families already,” he added. “The response to Second Hope has been positive.”

An article in the local paper in February brought both contributions to Second Hope from people in the community and inquiries from local families about receiving a loan. University Hope found similar reactions each time local media covers the ministry.

Phillips and Chisholm both hope other churches will launch similar efforts. Phillips noted that CBF Heartland set aside half of its disaster relief funds “to encourage churches to set up a program similar to University Heights and Second Baptist.” Chisholm said there are other credit unions that would be open to a partnership like the one they created for University Hope.

“It’s more than providing financial relief, it’s about getting involved in people’s lives,” Chisholm said. “There’s a lot of shame

that comes with taking out payday loans and people lose hope that they will ever get out of debt. Churches can help give people regain their sense of dignity.”

“This industry is predatory in its loan practices in targeting the poor and vulnerable in our communities by charging ungodly interest rates and fees,” he added. “Churches should become

more educated about the terrible impact of payday loans. It’s more of a justice issue than a political issue. I would encourage pastors to be open to this kind of work in their own communities and allow the Spirit to lead in the process.” ◀◀



Harold Phillips



Film Explores Missionary Heroism in

NIGERIAN

A documentary released last fall by EthicsDaily.com (also known as the Baptist Center for Ethics) made its Missouri debut on Feb. 1 in Kansas City. “The Disturbances” covers the previously-untold story of missionaries saving lives in the midst of genocidal violence in Nigeria in 1966. In a matter of days, thousands — and perhaps as many as 30,000 people — were killed due to their tribal identity. The film examines the genocide, how missionaries put their lives at risk to save targeted people and what their heroism tells us about the missionary spirit. Missionaries featured in the film include Southern Baptists Bill and Audrey Cowley and Bob and Jo Ann Parham, as well as Assemblies of God, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Lutheran and other missionaries.

Nearly 100 people attended the Kansas City screening at King of Kings Lutheran Church. Kirk Griebel, son of two Lutheran missionaries included in the film (Paul and Margaret Griebel), introduced the documentary and answered questions afterward. As a second-grader during the genocide, he admitted to not knowing much about it or what his parents did until one of his siblings learned about the film being made. He said these stories of genocide are “something that here in the United States we’re just not real familiar with, but it is a big deal” in countries like Nigeria that have experienced it in recent decades. He added that the film “raises questions on when to act or not to act, especially in regard to violence.”

BEARING WITNESS

Cliff Vaughn, media producer for EthicsDaily.com and co-producer of the film, said making the documentary took nearly two years from the start in November 2014 to its premiere in September 2016. He worked with co-producer Robert Parham, who lived in Nigeria as a missionary kid during the genocide but did not know until recently how much his parents and other



THE DISTURBA



GENOCIDE

By Brian Kaylor
Word&Way Editor



NCES



missionaries did to save lives.

"We interviewed 25 people on camera and talked to hundreds more in person, via phone, Skype, e-mail, etc," he explained. "We scanned about 2,500 pieces of material: letters, reports, slides, photos and so forth. We also digitized between three and four hours of missionaries' home movies from the era. We got material from about three dozen personal collections and a dozen different archives. I made a number of those archival visits myself and I always looked forward to them."

"I was surprised, and I think Robert was, too, at the amount of material we actually got," Vaughn added. "Sometimes it was a memory. Sometimes it was a film reel. Sometimes it was an airmail letter penned amidst the crisis. People had saved all sorts of things for decades. Sometimes they'd say to us, 'We've been hanging on to this for years. Glad someone can finally use it.'"

Many of the missionaries — now in their 70s, 80s and 90s — admitted in the film they had never told the story before — even to family members. Several fought back tears as they recounted the violence they witnessed fifty years earlier. Parham tells even more of the stories in a book released along with the film: "The Disturbances: The Untold Story of How Missionaries Saved Lives in a Time of Tribal Genocide." Vaughn said he remains "grateful" to have had the opportunity to meet the missionaries and hear their stories.

"I grew up in the Baptist church and was familiar with missionaries — or so I thought," Vaughn added. "But producing this project gave me a newfound respect for missionary life. Each situation is of course different, but I was struck by their resourcefulness, ingenuity and courage, among other things."

Few people outside Nigeria know anything about the 1966 genocide — and the generation of missionaries who lived through it are passing away. But Vaughn and Parham's film ensures the heroism of the missionaries will not be forgotten. And by telling the story, the film helps churches learn from — as the film's introduction calls it — "an account of how [the missionaries] bore witness and lived out their mission." ◀◀

Note: Learn more about "The Disturbances" at thedisturbances.com.



*People watch "The Disturbances" at King of Kings Lutheran Church.
(Brian Kaylor/Word&Way)*



*Kirk Griebel speaks at the film screening.
(Brian Kaylor/Word&Way)*



Cliff Vaughn films Robert Parham interviewing Yohanna Katanacho (a Baptist leader from Nazareth, Israel) for a different project during the 2015 Baptist World Congress in Durban, South Africa. (Brian Kaylor/Word&Way)

Lessons from the Family Table: 4 Reasons Why Sharing Meals Matter

By Carolyn Tomlin
for Word&Way



An old French proverb states, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” Although it may not apply to everything in life, it’s important when it comes to sharing meals together as a family. Do you recall the Norman Rockwell prints where two, three or more generations gathered around a table filled with healthy food? The artist captured expressions of happiness, respect and joy by simply being together. By the mid-twentieth century, this setting became less common. Instead of gathering around the table for the evening meal, we may find ourselves in drive-bys, waiting in line at a fast food restaurant while connecting with someone by cell phone.

However, a recent Gallup Poll reports that family dining is still a part of everyday life for the majority of U.S. parents. Fifty-three percent of adults with children younger than 18 say their family eats dinner together at home six or seven nights a week. But what about those who do not observe this ritual? Could this percentage be increased?

In interviewing Midwestern pastors, it’s good to see that family meals at their home are the norm — instead of the exception. It is a given: lessons learned around the family table bring warmth and security to children and teens. And this feeling carries over into adulthood, when they have families of their own. Consider these lessons children learn while sharing family meals.

LESSON #1: FAMILY MEALS CREATE SIBLING CLOSENESS

Richard Wakefield, former director of missions for the Wright-Douglas-Ozark Baptist Association in Missouri believes sharing meals together gave his children a sense of closeness.

“Our time together at the table paid off,” says Wakefield. “Now as adults, I see this in their love for each other,”

“As they ate, they talked,” he added. “We encouraged them to take the lead and they knew Mom and Dad were ready to listen. Of course, as they became older, we had to allow for sports and school activ-

ities. But it had to be a very good excuse to miss our evening meal around the table. In reading about breakdowns with families, I believe parents are missing an important time for setting an example of what a Christian home should be.”

He and his late wife, Mary, raised three boys, a girl and a foster son.

“We never knew how many of their friends would show up for a meal,” Wakefield recounted. “My wife would say, ‘There’s always room for another plate.’ And somehow there was always enough food to go around.”

He jokingly added, “Could this have been another loaves and fishes miracle?”

Communication and confidence in expressing opinions increase. In a safe family setting, children grow in their ability to connect and learn from each other. Not only do siblings and parents share information, but they develop a feeling of belonging and that their opinions matter.

LESSON #2: FAMILY MEALS HELP PARENTS AND CHILDREN CONNECT

In Bellevue, Neb., Chandler Acres Baptist Pastor Dan Wills and his wife, Cathy, continued the tradition of how they were raised. Family meals helped them know what was going on in the lives of their three sons and daughter.

“In addition to a limitless supply of food for athletic-prone kids, our meals together were a time to discuss school work and special projects where parents and children could work together,” says Wills. “One of our rules was this: no arguments at the table. Just nip it in the bud! Then, there was no eating in your rooms at mealtime. We ate together around the family table.”

Wills spoke of using this time together for spiritual training, also. He is often reminded of the advice given to parents in Proverbs 22:6: “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

LESSON #3: FAMILY MEALS ENCOURAGES A WHOLESOME LIFESTYLE

According to a study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, children who eat at least five meals per week with their family are at lower risk of developing poor eating habits, weight problems or alcohol and substance dependencies and tend to perform better in school than those who frequently eat alone or away from home.

Could it be that when families spend more time together they have more positive relationships? In planning family meals, there is more time to stay aware of what is going on in their children’s lives. A healthy relationship — of love and respect — between parents and children is a constructive approach to a wholesome lifestyle.

LESSON #4: FAMILY MEALS DEVELOP COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Through this nightly event, children and adults exchange ideas. Not only does it promote family togetherness, but the children learn good communication skills that will continue throughout life.

“Evening meals are always shared together,” says Tom Hendrix, a retired businessman in Tennessee. “We have a practice that everyone has to bring something new they have learned to the table. That can be about literature, world or local news, historical events — anything they have read or researched recently.”

Sharing time together as a family brings many rewards. It can bring siblings closer, build stronger bonds between parents and children, encourage a wholesome lifestyle and develop communication skills. Some things should never change. ◀◀



Carolyn Tomlin is co-author of “The Secret Holocaust Diaries: The Untold Story of Nonna Bannister” and teaches the Boot Camp for Christian Writers.

Q&A

Interview:

CHRISTIAN GEORGE ON THE LOST SERMONS OF C. H. SPURGEON

Interview By Brian Kaylor



In February, B&H Academic — a division of the Southern Baptist Convention's publishing house — released the first in a 12-volume set of "The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon." The books are edited by Christian George, who found the sermons a few years ago. George serves as curator of The Spurgeon Library and assistant professor of historical theology at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. Word&Way Editor Brian Kaylor interviewed George about the new volumes of Spurgeon sermons. Learn more about Spurgeon and The Spurgeon Library at spurgeon.org. Read a longer version of this interview at wordandway.org.

Your newest book is an edited volume of 'lost sermons' of famed 19th Century English Baptist preacher C. H. Spurgeon. How did you find these sermons and what was that moment like?

In 2011, as I was preparing to defend my Ph.D. dissertation, I encountered a stack of handwritten notebooks in London that contained the earliest sermons of Charles Spurgeon. For approximately 160 years, these sermons have been lost to publishing history. In 1857, Spurgeon tried to publish these sermons himself, but the demands of his new pastorate prevented him from doing so. As I held the stack of notebooks in my hand, my initial impulse was to fulfill Spurgeon's long-lost dream. I remember looking over at my wife, Rebecca, who was with me at the time and telling her with trembling

hands that by the grace of God we must finish the project Spurgeon had started. Since that moment six years ago, the road to publication has been anything but smooth.

Numerous publishing houses turned down the project because of its enormous size: the whole twelve volumes will be about one million words.

The project is a labor of scholarship, but it's also a labor of love. We wanted to present these sermons in a way that both the academy and the church could access. And to make it beautiful. We hired a professional artist to hand-marble the covers in the style of the original notebooks. We included full-color facsimiles of every one of the 6,000 handwritten pages, along with transcriptions, editorial commentary and a contextual/biographical introduction. "The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon" will add approximately ten percent of material to Spurgeon's total body of literature and will constitute the first critical edition of any of his works.

Since these sermons come from the earliest part of Spurgeon's ministry, how do these texts show signs of changes in his style or theology when compared to later, more well-known works of Spurgeon?

That's one question I have been asking also. And these also: What influences shaped Spurgeon's earliest ministry? What mistakes did he make? Did Spurgeon's theology, preaching style, or doctrinal emphases change or remain constant? Spurgeon's first

notebook of sermons contains his literary productions, beginning with only the fourth sermon Spurgeon ever preached. Spurgeon is a brand-new convert preaching only months after his conversion in the snow-storm of January 1850. At first, Spurgeon writes one-page outlines. He called them "Skeletons." But over the course of the notebooks, his sermons become longer in length. By Notebook 9, his sermons are fifteen pages in length. That is the only time in his whole ministry he ever fully manuscripted his messages. So the evolution of his style is a unique discovery in itself.

Spurgeon's audience also shaped his ministry. His first pastorate at Waterbeach Chapel was composed mainly of farmers. So he's forced to communicate in a language that ordinary people could understand. His preaching is simple, clear, beautiful and mesmerizing. Never academic or dry, Spurgeon used his teenage years to hone his words for common people. As he later said, "The Lord Jesus did not say, 'Feed my giraffes,' but 'Feed my sheep.'" That was one of the secrets of his success: he was the people's preacher. When he goes to London in 1854, he never lost that ability to connect with the hardworking, ordinary people around him.

With the exception of his eschatology (we're still analyzing this), Spurgeon's theology never shifts from where it started. From first to last, he is a Christ-centered preacher through and through. One way we measure Spurgeon's constancy is to compare sermons in which Spurgeon preached from the same passages on different occasions throughout his ministry. This gives us a baseline from which we can trace the development of his thinking. As Spurgeon grows older, his understanding of Scripture deepens

and broadens. His physical and emotional sufferings, along with his controversies and life-experience enrich his love of the Bible, but never does he budge one theological inch from his earliest convictions about the core tenants of Christianity.

As an expert in the life and work of Spurgeon, what was the biggest surprise or revelation for you in the sermons?

You know, Spurgeon is often presented as some kind of bulletproof superhero who can do no wrong. After all, the man published more words in the English language than any preacher in history: 150 books, 63 volumes of sermons, a commentary on the Psalms that took two decades to complete, a monthly magazine. He was pastor of the largest Protestant church in the world.

He founded sixty-six ministries including a theological college for underprivileged ministers, two orphanages, a book fund, nursing homes, ministries for policemen and prostitutes, among many others. He stood against the tide of his times with courage, conviction and great clarity. He earned multi-millions of dollars from his sermon sales (from 1871-1892 he earned the equivalent of \$26 million). Yet Spurgeon died relatively poor because he funneled all of his earnings back into these ministries. He personally shouldered the cost of much of his social work. For these reason, there is so much to appreciate about this great man and so much in his life to cause us to reflect about our own use of time and resources.

But Spurgeon could also bleed. He himself was a deeply-wounded man. He suffered from depression and almost quit the ministry in his early twenties when he watched a balcony collapse and kill seven people in his congregation. These early sermons humanize the man and show us not just his dimples, but his warts as well. For me, that's been one of the biggest surprises of this project. Here is Spurgeon at his most vulnerable — a young teenage preacher

trying to find his voice, trying to figure out how to preach. His mistakes are obvious and he often scratched through words and phrases he wished he didn't write. Yes, his sermons are bold and zealous. He calls out sin where he sees it in his community. But he also calls out sin he sees within him. In these sermons, we encounter a softer side of Spurgeon. Pride was his "darling" sin, and he wrestled with it fiercely. The prayers he wrote at the end of his sermons reveal a young man utterly desperate for God: "God, help me, a poor thing." "Oh Father, help through Jesus." "God, my Father, help me." "Lord, help thy weakling." "Lord, revive my stupid soul!" "Oh God bless me or I am undone." So the project reveals not only new productions from Spurgeon, but also an unseen process.

“The Lord Jesus did not say, ‘Feed my giraffes,’ but ‘Feed my sheep.’ That was one of the secrets of his success: he was the people’s preacher.”

every human life was sacred because we are all made in the image of God — regardless of skin color. Spurgeon called slavery “man-stealing,” and even broke fellowship with pastors who owned slaves.

Southern Baptists were among Spurgeon’s harshest enemies. Spurgeon was ten when Southern Baptists broke from Northern Baptists over slavery in 1845. Before the U.S. Civil War, Spurgeon received death threats. The media defamed his character. And many wanted to see this abolitionist assassinated. How ironic, symmetrical and redemptive that Spurgeon’s early sermons would be published not by his own publisher, Passmore & Alabaster in London, but by Americans. And not only Americans, but Southern Americans. And not only Southern Americans, but

Southern Baptist Americans with all the baggage of our bespeckled beginnings.

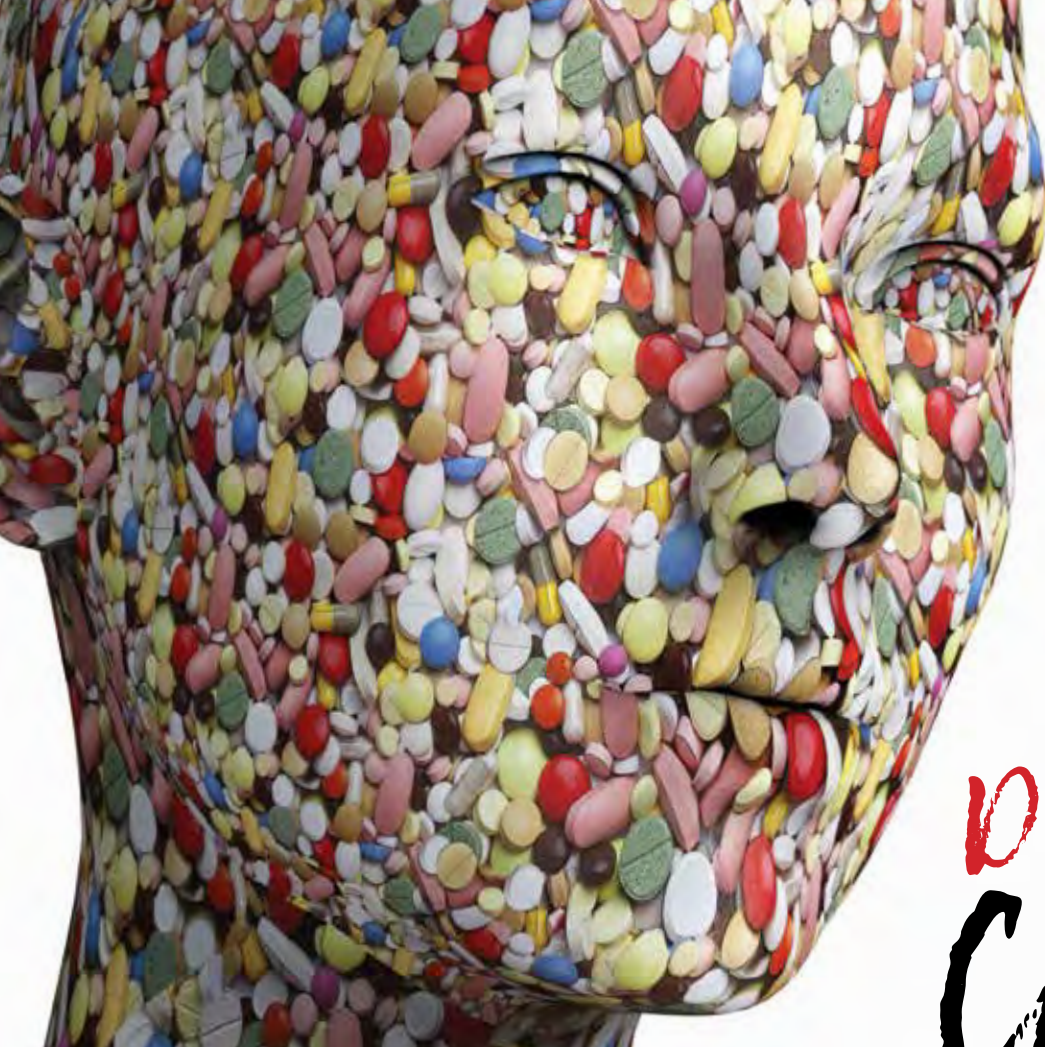
What's the relevance of Spurgeon for us today that make these sermons worth printing and reading?

Charles Spurgeon died in 1892, but God still has something for that Victorian teenager to say. Like Abel, I believe Spurgeon “still speaks, even though he is dead” (Hebrews 11:4). He reminds us that the answer to our problems is not politics or presidents. The answer is Jesus Christ. Only when Christ is at the center of our lives can our lives be ultimately centered. In these sermons, future generations will discover one of the greatest amplifiers of God’s glory. Spurgeon once said, “I would fling my shadow through eternal ages if I could.” Truly, his life and legacy have spilled into our own age. And who knows? With the rise of social media, Charles Spurgeon might become more popular in our day than he was even in his very own. As Helmut Thielicke once said of Spurgeon: “This bush from old London still burns and shows no signs of being consumed.” ◀◀

The other great surprise of this project is the story within the story. When Spurgeon tried to publish these sermons in 1857, Americans throughout the south burned his sermons. Southerners hated Spurgeon because he was an outspoken abolitionist. Spurgeon believed



◀◀ Charles Spurgeon's original notebooks



How Churches Can Respond to the Drug Abuse Crisis

By Denise George
for Word&Way

The abuse of prescription painkiller opioids, heroin, and methamphetamine is skyrocketing in Missouri — and in the United States, becoming the nation's fastest-growing substance abuse problems. In 2016, approximately 419,000 Missourians struggled with a substance use disorder, including about 17,000 teenagers between the ages of 12 and 17, more than 30,000 veterans and about 8,400 pregnant women.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health notes that one-third of people 12 years and over who use drugs began by taking prescription drugs prescribed to someone else. The Missouri Hospital Association and the Hospital Industry Data Institute found that hospital treatments in Missouri for the overuse of opioids has risen 137 percent in the last decade, a rate much higher than the national average. Between 2005-2014, emergency room visits for opioid overuse in Missouri more than doubled. Missouri law now requires its pharmacies to keep Schedule II controlled substances, like Oxycodone,

Fentanyl and other drugs with high addiction potential, locked up at all times.

Some Missourians blame the state's lack of a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program as one of the culprits. PDMP is a database for physicians to monitor prescriptions, alerting doctors to patients who seek pain-killing opioids. In 2015, 5.2 million opioid prescriptions were written in Missouri. It is now the only state without the program. Without a PDMP, people from other states drive to Missouri to fill repetitively-abused prescriptions. For the past six years, bills have been introduced to keep track of the state's controlled substances prescriptions. But receiving strong opposition from privacy rights groups, the Missouri bills have failed.

BEYOND PRESCRIPTIONS

Many prescription abusers are transitioning from prescription drugs to heroin. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 75 percent of new heroin users first became hooked on prescription opiates. When dealers mix the synthetic painkiller opioid Fentanyl to heroin, it becomes much more deadly.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE DRUG ABUSE AND ADDICTION

Here are a few common physical and behavioral signs of drug abuse/addiction:

- anxiety, irritability, hyperactivity, lethargy and unpredictable mood swings;
- tremors, shakiness, red eyes, runny nose and coordination problems;
- constant need for money, poor school/work performance and unexplained confusion;
- unusual changes in weight and physical withdrawal symptoms when not using the drug

Fentanyl is 100 times more potent than morphine, 50 times stronger than heroin and can quickly cause unconsciousness and death. Some heroin users are unaware that Fentanyl has been added.



Methamphetamine abuse in Missouri is also growing. Last October in the St. Louis area, in one of Missouri's largest drug busts, police arrested 36 dealers, confiscating nearly 200 pounds of methamphetamine with a street value of \$3 million. Dealers are no longer buying as much methamphetamine from small meth makers in rural Missouri — a practice so common it gave the state the nickname "Meth Capital of the U.S." and Jefferson County (southwest of St. Louis) the nickname "Metherson." Dealers are now purchasing more methamphetamine from "Super Labs" in Mexico and other major distributors south of the border. Even so, Methamphetamine-cooking in labs has become such a problem in Jefferson County that pharmacists recently put an end to over-the-counter sales of cold and allergy medications that contain pseudoephedrine, the main ingredient in methamphetamine.

HOW CHURCHES CAN HELP

How can Baptist pastors and congregations be instrumental in helping to address educate, and prevent dangerous substance abuses? Here are some suggestions:

- **Observe** a special Sunday emphasis, such as the Southern Baptist Convention's Substance Abuse Prevention Sunday on March 19. Plan a special service and preach about substance abuse prevention from the pulpit. Make your congregation aware of the problem.

- **Hold** classes and seminars in your

church and community to teach youth and adults the dangers of prescription opioids, heroin and methamphetamine abuse. Provide them with literature, resources, and emergency phone numbers. (See *Sidebar: Helpful Resources*)

- **Educate** the congregation to understand the side effects and recognize the physical and behavioral symptoms of substance abuse. (See: *Sidebar: How to Recognize Drug Abuse and Addiction*)

- **Encourage** parents and caretakers of children and youth to safely dispose of unused prescription medications, flushing them down the toilet or working with local pharmacists who sponsor drug take-back disposal programs.

- **Research**, check out and make a list of qualified health care providers and drug/alcohol treatment centers in your area. Keep the information available and updated should you need to contact or make a referral.

- **Partner** with other churches and community leaders to address substance abuses.

In these and many other ways, pastors, church leaders and congregations can seek to address and respond to Missouri's growing substance abuse crisis.



Denise George, author of 30 books, is co-author (with Robert Child) of the new book *"The Lost Eleven: The Forgotten Story of Black American Soldiers Brutally Massacred in World War II."* She is married to Timothy George, founding dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University.



Helpful Resources

- The Division of Behavioral Health is responsible for assuring the availability of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery support services for Missouri. Email them at dbhmail@dmh.mo.gov or call (573)751-4942 or (800)575-7480
- For information provided by the narcotic task forces by county, see narcoticnews.com/investigations/task-forces/
- For a listing of drug abuse treatment programs by state, see drugabuse.com/drug-abuse-programs
- For a listing of drug and alcohol programs for youth in Missouri, see addicted.org/missouri-adolescent-programs.html or call 1-800-304-2219
- To contact the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Drug Tip Line, please call: 636-797-6474
- To find locations to take unused, unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medicines for Jefferson County's Permanent Prescription Drug Drop Boxes, see <http://tinyurl.com/JeffCoBoxes>

Religious Liberty Advocates Split on Judge

After President Donald Trump nominated Judge Neil Gorsuch for a vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, advocates for religious liberty offered mixed assessments. As a judge on the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Gorsuch ruled on four key church-state cases. In two cases, he joined the majority to rule against the Affordable Care Act's mandates on insurance coverage for birth control. In two other cases, he offered a dissenting opinion arguing in favor of religious displays on public lands that the

court's majority found unconstitutional. He argued for allowing a Ten Commandments monument at an Oklahoma county courthouse and for allowing a private group to install crosses on public property in Utah.

Southern Baptist leaders quickly praised Gorsuch's record on "the strengthening of religious liberty." Those urging a "quick confirmation" included leaders of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, five SBC seminary presidents, SBC's president, and leaders of GuideStone Financial Resources

and LifeWay Christian Resources.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State criticized Gorsuch for a "dangerous" and "one-sided view of religious freedom." The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty said it "does not support or oppose judicial nominees." Yet the BJC promised to "review Judge Neil Gorsuch's record on church-state matters" and urged the Senate to "take its responsibilities seriously to evaluate him in the confirmation process." ◀◀

BIBLE CROSSWORD

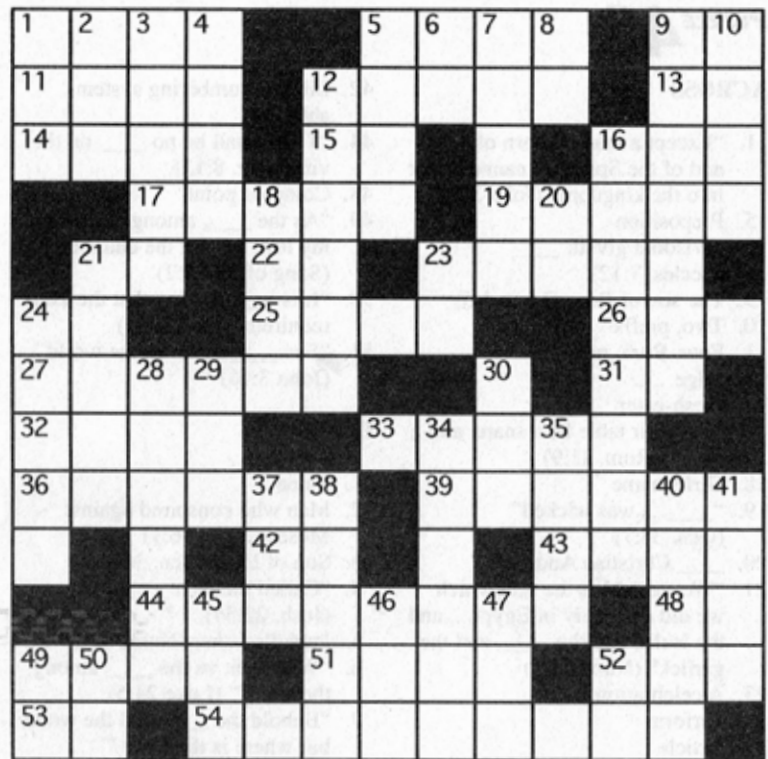
© Barbour Publishing Inc.

Across

1. "The _____ of God is eternal life" (Rom. 6:23)
5. "Jesus Christ our _____" (Rom. 1:3)
9. Civil Servant, abbr.
11. "To God _____ wise, be glory" (Rom. 16:27)
12. "Walk in the _____, as he is" (1 John 1:7)
13. Of age, Lat. abbr.
14. "The fallow _____" (Deut. 14:5)
15. "The grace _____ our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (Rev. 22:21)
16. Tender loving care, abbr.
17. "Whom I _____ with my spirit in the gospel" (Rom. 1:9)
19. "The Word was made flesh, and _____ among us" (John 1:14)
21. New England state, abbr.
22. Electrical engineer, abbr.
23. Abraham's wife (Gen. 12:5)
24. Southern continent, abbr.
25. "We have seen his _____ in the east" (Matt. 2:2)
26. All news station, abbr.
27. "He ever _____ to make intercession" (Heb. 7:25)
31. Heligram, abbr.
32. Got down
33. "And _____ himself in water" (Lev. 15:5)
36. "My heart's desire and prayer to God for _____ is, that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1)
39. "One _____ stretched forth his hand ... unto the fire" (Ezek. 10:7)
42. French article
43. Assistant, abbr.
44. "A virgin shall conceive ... and shall call his name _____" (Isa.

7:14)

48. Biblical land: _____ of the Chaldees
 49. "I am the true _____" (John 15:1)
 51. "He _____ again the third day" (1 Cor. 15:4)
 52. Spring month
 53. Preposition
 54. "His name shall be called _____" (Isa. 9:6)
- ### Down
1. "For _____ is my witness" (Rom. 1:9)
 2. Chemical suffix
 3. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the _____ is of God" (1 John 4:2)
 4. "The coasts of _____" (Matt. 15:21)
 5. "He that hath the son hath _____" (1 John 5:12)
 6. King of Bashan (Num. 21:33)
 7. The damsel that opened the door for Peter (Acts 12:13)
 8. Dental technician, abbr.
 9. "That ye may know what is the hope of his _____" (Eph. 1:18)
 10. "After the most straitest _____ of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:5)
 12. "He that _____ not knoweth God" (1 John 4:8)
 16. "When for the time ye ought to be _____, ye have need that one teach you again" (Heb. 5:12)
 18. "We which have believed do enter into _____" (Heb. 4:3)
 20. American actor and humorist,



See answers on page 30

- initials
21. "Except I shall ... put my finger into the print of the _____ ... I will not believe" (John 20:25)
23. Jr.'s dad
24. "The Lamb that was _____" (Rev. 5:12)
28. Mary as a _____ when Christ as born
29. When you'll reach your destination, more or less, abbr.
30. Bachelor of Theology, abbr.
34. "Do not think that I will _____ you to the Father" (John 5:45)
35. "Come down, and _____ his son" (John 4:47)
37. Shade tree (Hos. 4:13)
38. "Take my yoke upon you, and _____ of me" (Matt. 11:29)
40. Habitual
41. Battery, abbr.
45. Kitten cry
46. Biblical land (Gen. 4:16)
47. Before, poetic
49. South Carolina's neighbor to the north, abbr.
50. Neuter pronoun
52. University of Missouri, abbr.

Politicize our charities and churches? NO, THANKS.



America's charities, including houses of worship, receive special tax treatment, given their unique and historical role in our society to serve the public interest. In return for that most-favored tax status, all 501(c)(3) organizations must follow certain rules. Among them, nonprofits are prohibited from engaging in partisan campaigns. President Donald Trump's pledge to "get rid of and totally destroy" this rule attacks the integrity of both our charitable groups and campaign finance system, with potential for great harm for houses of worship.

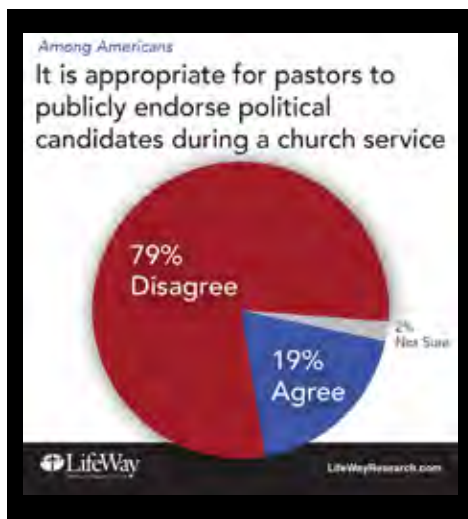
Changing the law is not about protecting free speech. Preachers can and do speak out — including from the pulpit — on any issue and houses of worship may advocate for moral and ethical positions. Pastors and other church leaders, as individuals, can participate in the electoral process as much as they wish, as long as tax-exempt church resources are not used and it is clear the pastor is acting in his individual capacity. And, if a church really wants to wade into the political morass by intervening in an election, it can give up its charitable tax designation.

But beware, for as soon as the church joins at the hip with a particular candidate or party, its prophetic witness — its ability to speak truth to power and not risk being co-opted by the government — is hindered. The credibility and integrity of congregations would suffer with bad decisions of candidates they endorsed.

There has been no outcry from the grassroots for a change in the law. To the contrary, overwhelming majorities of Americans are opposed to pastors endorsing or opposing candidates from pulpits. In a survey released by LifeWay Research last year, 8 in 10 people said it

is inappropriate for pastors to endorse a candidate in church. Clergy members as a group are even more against the idea, with nearly 9 in 10 opposed when LifeWay Research asked previously.

Why is this idea so unpopular? Inviting churches to intervene in campaigns with tax-deductible offerings would fundamentally change our houses of worship. There is no incentive for a pastor to alienate any of her parishioners with candidate endorsements. For people in the pews, their reasons for going to church most likely do not include the need to hear another political campaign ad.



Churches are not immune to the well-documented trend of self-sorting over political views, but turning churches into arms of a political party — having a "First Democratic Baptist Church" and a "First Republican Baptist Church" — would have a detrimental impact on our houses of worship and civil discourse.

It is not yet clear how President Trump plans to eviscerate this protection in the law. Presumably, he will need to rely on Congress. One bill recently introduced

would not "totally destroy" the statute but change it in troubling ways, permitting charitable organizations to campaign in the ordinary course of activities and in furtherance of their purpose if incurring minimal costs. For those concerned with government regulation, these standards should raise red flags — they invite IRS scrutiny to determine whether the speech is in line with a group's purpose and to examine financial accounts to calculate a percentage of funds spent on politics.

The church has proved itself to be an agent of change without acting like a PAC. During debate in the House of Representatives on this issue nearly 15 years ago, Rep. John Lewis of Georgia — who stood alongside the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights movement — gave a powerful testimony.

"The church was the heart and soul of our efforts because ministers had the moral authority and respect to stand against immoral and indefensible laws," he said. "At no time did we envision or even contemplate the need for our houses of worship to become partisan pulpits."

Politicizing churches is not a solution to a problem — it is a problem in search of a problem. Churches are not political committees, nor should they be. ◀◀

Amanda Tyler, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, wrote this column for Religion News Service.



amandaTyler

» The Shepherd Calls

The Price of MONEY



wadeParis

"Brother Wade," the voice said on the phone. I recognized the voice. "Why, hello, how are you?"

He never answered how he was; instead he moved immediately to his reason for calling, "Mom is about to lose her car."

"What do you mean 'lose her car'? What are you telling me?" I know this family and they are not wasteful. They are simply poor. Their breadwinner has not had an

increase in salary for years. The person calling me, a member of the household, is extremely ill.

The story unfolded typically. They got in a financial bind and borrowed money (at double-digit interest rate) from a payday loan company using the only security they had, the family car. As you might expect, they overestimated their ability to repay the loan and the loan company was demanding the car.

I secured the phone number and called the loan company myself. "How much do they owe?" I asked. They gave me the figure without any permission to do so. If I tell you I will pay off their loan, will you let them take the car home?"

"We will if you will give us a credit card number," the person on the phone answered. I wanted to be angry, but I realized I was speaking to a clerk who didn't make the rules and could only do what was allowed.

"You've got it," I answered. "Here is the credit card number."

The true story above plays out all over our land many times a day. It's a story of those who "have" taking advantage of those who "have not." It's a story of the rich fleecing the poor. The Bible is filled with condemnation for this practice. The prophets condemned the rich for standing in worship while planning to take advantage of the poor. Jesus regularly helped and defended the poor. The teacher James said it is "pure religion to take care of the widows and orphans."

The message of the Bible is clear: when God blesses us materially, he expects us to help the less fortunate. However, greed often takes over when people are blessed; and rather than help others, they seek more.

All over our country, multiple efforts are being made to regulate this phenomenon of "the rich growing richer while the poor grow poorer," but with little success. There is cause for national concern here. Historically, countries falter when the gap between the rich and poor becomes unreasonable.

Allow me to repeat myself: God's plan is for those who are blessed to help those in need.

» Wade Paris writes a weekly syndicated column titled "The Shepherd Calls."

» Media & Faith

Be Memorable WITH A LITTLE SHORTNIN'



kenSatterfield

Imagine: You have put together an award-worthy video and now you are ready to tell the world about it. An announcement is crafted that captures people's attention as well as their interest. And then you tell people where to find it: youtube.com/watch?v=dQw4w9WgXcQ

Who's going to read that address out loud? And who

wants to type that into their com-

puter? Thud. You could send the link by email or text, or embed it on your website or social media feed. But for those times you have to rely on print — a letter, a flyer or a business card — how do you make it memorable, easier to copy down and short enough to easily fit on a slide or in a blog?

Abbreviating the website address with an URL shortener can be the answer you are looking for. There are several options, each with their own strengths, but all are free:

Bitly.com: Paste in the website address into the box and it will generate a link like bit.ly/2geeMiG. Additionally, you can track the traffic your link receives.

TinyURL.com: Either paste in the URL to generate a link or supply a custom alias to produce a link as in tinyurl.com/MATIsurprise.

Goo.gl: Google has their own version that displays the original link, the truncated link like goo.gl/u2oBqt and the number of clicks it has received.

More information can be found at vanityurlshorteners.com. There are a variety of other options that can be found with the online version of this article.

A second option would be to obtain a vanity URL, customized to identify with a company or brand. For example, when the New York Times tweets, their links begin with "nyti.ms", or WIRED magazine with "trib.al." The cost of the services vary and again, you can find additional link online if you are interested. One caution would be to examine the track record of the company you consider; there are many smaller companies that are no longer in business.

A third option is to use a URL shortener that pays you back each time it is clicked, such as Adfly. The viewer will see an advertisement before they view the actual link. Keep in mind that many domains don't generate enough traffic to make these worthwhile, and the cost of an annoyed visitor may offset even those costs.

Being memorable helps you communicate more effectively, which in turn helps that wonderful video (or website) you created to actually be visited and seen.

» Ken Satterfield, a former media specialist, is Word&Way's Advertising and Marketing Coordinator. Find related links for this column online.



Be Kind to PKs!

Our oldest child had a birthday recently. She is now grown and married, with children of her own. But you just never forget the birth of your first child. I was a pastor, so can you guess where we were when my wife went into labor? At a Wednesday night church fellowship supper! If I had been paying attention, I would have realized that this event was a portent. Our children's lives would be forever impacted — for good or ill — by the church.

Let me say at the outset that my three children are all very happy, well-adjusted adults. And allow me to also say that our kids had a wonderful experience growing up in a pastor's home — for the most part.

But unless you have lived in a pastor's home, you have no idea the pressures and expectations thrust upon children of clergy. I know of an instance in which a pastor's daughter was elected president of the youth council, only to see the position go to another person "because we didn't want to be seen as playing favorites with the PK." Another spouse of a pastor reported that her son was taken out of a Sunday School class for misbehaving. The teacher reported, "Other boys were acting up, too, but we felt like the pastor's son should be the example."

One of the most common (and idiotic) mistakes occurs when a Sunday School teacher calls on the pastor's child to give the correct Bible answer "because she probably knows this." Listen in on nearly any clergy gathering and you will sooner or later hear someone confess, "It's a wonder that my grown kid goes to church at all!"

I remember when one of our daughters was in college. She met a friend whose parents had just lost their jobs at a Baptist institution because of the denominational wars. Given the sudden change in family finances, would this PK be able to remain in school? Moreover, would he ever go to church again? More needs to be researched and written about children of Baptist pastors who grew up during that dark time.

*"If we really want to love our
pastors, let's do something
nice and unexpected
for their children."*

Beyond the stereotypical done-with-authority, done-with-institutions issues, how were Gen Xers and Millennials affected by this added conflict?

The late Calvin Miller once shared a memory of his days as a pastor. He and his family were on their way home from church on a frigid, snowy Sunday night. The business meeting had not gone well. Silence filled the car all the way into their garage. As they walked into the house, Miller's wife turned to their young son, grabbed him and said, "If you EVER think about going into the ministry, I'll slap you into next week!"

Yes, clergy homes can be stressful. But PKs experience many blessings and privileges as well. Our children were exposed to great music, met wonderful people and found deep friendships at church. In some

ways, pastors' children get a head start on life: difficult people do not define us; conflict is an opportunity to grow and learn. And in the best situations, clergy families develop a wonderful sense of humor, roaring with laughter in the face of life's incongruities (such as, the deacon who didn't believe the pastor's child should go to the school dance, but allowed his own to attend).

For every instance in which my children were slighted, I can think of two dozen in which they were treated wonderfully. When I visited my current church as a candidate to be their pastor, our son was halfway through high school. At the beginning of a long day filled with interviews and receptions, a deacon swept in and rescued Joel. He took our son to lunch, introduced him to other youth and showed him the high school and the town.

Here's a hint: if we really want to love our pastors, let's do something nice and unexpected for their children. We recognize National Donut Day. Why don't churches have a Love A PK Day? How about bumper stickers that read, I BRAKE FOR PKs? Be thoughtful. Be kind. Let pastors' kids be kids. Don't add to their load. They are carrying enough as it is.

▶▶ Doyle
Sager is senior
pastor of
First Baptist
Church in
Jefferson City,
Mo.



doyle Sager

Can the Swastika Ever be REDEEMED?

By Kimberly Winston
Religion News Service

In one weekend, the swastika appeared in public places in three U.S. cities — Houston, Chicago and New York. The sight was so offensive, average New Yorkers pulled out hand sanitizer and tissues to wipe the graffiti from the walls of the subway where it had been scrawled.

“Within about two minutes, all the Nazi symbolism was gone,” one subway rider said. “Everyone kind of just did their jobs of being decent human beings.”

That two-minute incident on a northbound No. 1 train underneath Manhattan is a blip in the swastika’s 6,000-year history. The plus-sign symbol with four hooked arms all pointing either clockwise or counterclockwise appeared in Asian, African, North and South American cultures millennia before Adolf Hitler and the Nazis made the clockwise version of it the emblem of their aggression for 25 years.

Yet the Nazis’ brief but horrendous association with the swastika managed to divorce the symbol from its original ties to religion and spirituality, at least for Western cultures, though it is still used and revered by Buddhists, Hindus, Jains and others.

How did the swastika travel from pre-historical India to a New York City subway? Can it ever be restored to its original place as a sign of fertility, good fortune and hope? And in a broader sense, how likely is it in this age of globalization and rapid-fire social media that an ancient hooked cross, a sad-faced frog or the name of an Egyptian goddess can be reclaimed from their hate-related associations?

“The swastika is the most complex symbol of any civilization,” said Steven Heller, a graphic designer who teaches at New York’s School of Visual Arts and is the author of “The Swastika: Symbol Beyond Redemption?” “For some, it has a great history that was perverted for only 25 or 30



Hindu priests in Ahmedabad, India, light oil lamps for Diwali in a formation of a swastika, a Hindu symbol of peace. (Amit Dave/Reuters)

years. For others, that perversion nullifies it.”

The word “swastika” comes from Sanskrit and is variously translated as “well-being” or “self-existing,” a kind of spiritual affirmation and good-luck symbol. It was sacred to early Hindus and Buddhists, who used it as early as 3,000 B.C. in the Indus Valley. One theory holds that ancient peoples traveled a trade route to other cultures, taking the swastika with them in the designs of baskets, blankets and pots. Another theory is that the symbol is so elemental it appeared in several cultures and spread to others that adapted it for their own uses. Swastikas are found in Celtic stone carvings, Nordic ornamentation, Greek and Roman mosaics, Native American blankets, Mayan ruins and Jain temples.

In the late 19th century, German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann found the swastika in the ruins of ancient Troy, on the plains of contemporary Turkey. Schliemann believed the swastika emanated from an ancient Aryan tribe that found its way to Troy and, eventually, Europe and Germany. Schliemann described the swastika as a “significant religious symbol of our remote ancestors.”

Heller says Schliemann’s discovery of Troy was “like the moon landing” of its time. His discoveries captured the Western imagination and soon swastikas were popping up everywhere — in the patterns of wedding dresses, on greeting cards and decorative objects and in advertising. In the U.S., Coca-Cola, the Boy Scouts and

military regiments all used the swastika.

Schliemann’s theory found a dark traction in Germany, where nationalist sentiments were bubbling to the surface. At first, it was used by scattered anti-Semitic groups and, by 1920, the Nazi Party adopted it, using only the clockwise rendition of the arms of the central cross. In “Mein Kampf,” Hitler wrote of how he deliberately chose the swastika to represent Nazi goals.

After World War II, Germany banned the use of the swastika and the “runes” — the lightning bolt-like, double capital S used by the Schutzstaffel, or SS. These symbols are still so loaded they remain outlawed in Germany.

The swastika is not alone in its ignominy. Since the rise of the Islamic State group, often referred to as ISIS, a handful of businesses and products have changed their names and Pepe the Frog, intended as a lighthearted figure, is now an emblem of white supremacists.

But some once-hated symbols have been successfully rehabilitated. The LGBT community adopted the pink triangle given to “sexual deviants” in the Nazi concentration camps and made it a rallying point for gay pride; and the Christian cross was once an image of terror, used by the Romans to threaten a torturous execution.

“I think what we were seeing over the weekend is the symbol is proving itself to be irredeemable this close to the Holocaust,” Heller said. “Even though the Holocaust survivors are almost gone, it is still in our literature, in our plays and the like.” ◀◀

Baptists Withdraw Support for Franklin Graham Rally in Puerto Rico

By Bob Allen
Baptist News Global

Baptists in Puerto Rico withdrew support for Franklin Graham's Feb. 10-12 Festival of Hope evangelistic rally in San Juan in protest of the evangelist's endorsement of anti-immigration policies espoused by President Donald Trump. The executive minister and the president of the Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico issued a statement Feb. 4 saying Graham's endorsement of Trump's policies "are for us contrary to the values of the Kingdom."

"The Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico historically affirms that our standard of faith and conduct is the Bible," Executive Minister Roberto Dieppa-Báez and President Margarita Ramirez said in the statement written in Spanish.

"From the Old Testament to the New Testament, God continually calls us to justice, to love, peace and mercy and, above all, to accompany the marginalized, foreigners, widows and orphans," they said according to an Internet translation.

The Baptist leaders said Trump's immigration policies "attack the life of our neighbor, and Jesus has always called us to love even enemies and to be our brother's keeper." The release said the Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico board of directors decided to withdraw their support for the event — held at the same stadium where Graham's father, Billy Graham, preached to more than 175,000 people during the San Juan Global Mission in 1995 — "for reasons of conscience." The Baptist leaders said individual churches and pastors remain free to make up their own mind about

whether to participate.

Franklin Graham, who succeeded his father as CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in 2002, recently defended Trump's executive order blocking refugees from Syria from entering the country and barring immigrants from seven predominantly Muslim nations deemed high risk by the White House, saying for him it is "not a Bible issue."

"It's not a biblical command for the country to let everyone in who wants to come, that's not a Bible issue," Graham said in a Huffington Post article published Jan. 25.

"We want to love people, we want to be kind to people, we want to be considerate, but we have a country and a country should have order and there are laws that relate to immigration and I think we should follow those laws," Graham told associate religion editor Carol Kuruvilla. "Because of the dangers we see today in this world, we need to be very careful."

The Baptist Churches of Puerto Rico is one of 34 regions affiliated with American Baptist Churches USA and the only one that is fully Hispanic. As of 2011, the region numbered 112 churches with more than 25,000 members. The region's leaders said they did not intend to undermine the Festival of Hope but issued their statement in order "to affirm our testimony in favor of the poor, marginalized and foreigners, among others."

"Let us continue in prayer so that the gospel of Jesus can be proclaimed and lived in all our earth," the Baptist leaders said.

It isn't the first time that Graham's outspoken views on controversial issues such as homosexuality, Islam and immigration have caused a stumbling block for an evangelistic event. Last fall five pastors in Canada — two of them Baptists — said publicly they would not be supporting Graham's March 2017 Festival of Hope crusade in Vancouver, labeling him a poor witness for the gospel.

In addition to his role with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Graham runs Samaritan's Purse, an international relief agency with programs including

Operation Christmas Child, an annual event that recruits volunteers in churches and other organizations to fill shoeboxes with Christmas gifts for impoverished children in more than 150 countries and territories around the world.

A Baptist News Global columnist recently suggested moderate Baptist churches that participate in Operation Christmas Child unwittingly give Graham a platform to spout his political views.

"Do you really want to send a dose of hatred along with that shoebox of Christmas trinkets?" Mark Wingfield, associate pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas, wrote Jan. 28. "Does handing out Christmas gifts counterbalance Graham's declaration that many of those who receive them would not be welcome in America?"

"There are other — and better — ways to support refugees and children in need around the world," said Wingfield. "In reality, sending a shoebox of odds and ends is less effective than providing food and clothing and shelter and education.

"If you are outraged by Franklin Graham's misrepresentation of Christian doctrine, channel your support somewhere else, like World Vision or any of the reputable denomination-based relief agencies," Wingfield said.

The Charlotte Observer reported in 2015 that between his two jobs Graham received compensation totaling more than \$880,000 in 2013. That made him the highest-paid CEO of any international relief agency based in the United States, but it was less than the \$1.2 million he received in 2008.

Last year the IRS reclassified the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association as an "association of churches" so that the charity is no longer required to file a financial disclosure form that includes top salaries of executives. The sister organization Samaritan's Purse also requested reclassification for the same reasons but reportedly did not receive an immediate response. ◀◀



Franklin Graham
preaching at the
Missouri Capitol in
May of 2016
(Brian Kaylor/Word&Way)

RESOURCES

▶ CLASSIFIED ADS

PASTORAL MINISTRY

UNITY BAPTIST, a small rural 175-year old church outside Fulton, Mo., is searching for a bivocational pastor. Resumes will be accepted until April 1, 2017. Mail to: Pastor Search Committee, Unity Baptist Church, 6574 County Road 133, Fulton, MO 65251.

MUSIC MINISTRY

SONG LEADER AND/OR PIANIST needed for Sunday morning worship service. Little Bonne Femme Church, Columbia, Mo. 573-808-0917.

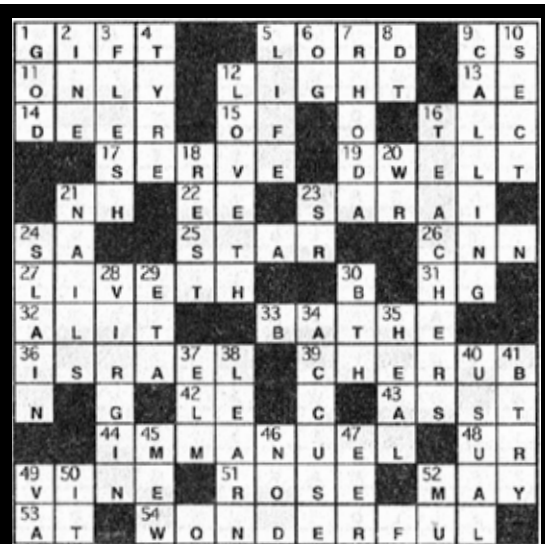
FOR SALE

FOR SALE: 2003 CHEVROLET VENTURE LS 8-passenger van. 93K miles. Well-maintained. Kept under roof. 2 new tires. Asking 4K. First Baptist Church, PO Box 5, Whiteville, TN 38075. Contact fbcwhitevilletn@gmail.com.

SERVICES

IF YOU THINK HOOPS ARE EXCITING, imagine responses to your classified ads for positions, goods and services. Ads are flexible and affordable, with plenty of perks online and by email at no extra cost. Contact Ken Satterfield, ads@wordandway.org or 573-635-5939, ext. 8.

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Answers to page 24 puzzle

A Sign for Our Times

Cut out it & hang it up!

Last fall, a Mennonite church in Virginia created a yard sign to offer a message of neighborly love in the midst of a campaign where yard signs often divided neighbors. The sign simply states in three languages: "No matter where you are from, we're glad you're our neighbor." The church, Immanuel Mennonite Church, is in Harrisonburg, Va., an area with a long history of resettling refugees and immigrants. The original design included the text in Spanish, English and Arabic. The church later created other versions with other languages. Although each version includes English and Arabic, other options for the top section include Armenian, French, German, Hindi and Somali. Thousands of people have ordered the yard signs. The church offers a downloadable file for each design free on their website (<http://tinyurl.com/ImmanuelSign>). The signs have popped up in communities across the country and have sparked news coverage in various publications. Since President Donald Trump's executive order on immigration visas and refugee resettlement, the signs have surged again in popularity.

On the adjoining page, we have printed the Spanish-English-Arabic version. We placed it there so you can easily cut the page off and hang it up — perhaps at your church, office or home. Send us a photo of your poster page on display. We will print some photos in a future issue of Word&Way. Send your photos to editor@wordandway.org or PO Box 1771, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1771.

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estamos contentos que seas
nuestro vecino.*

No matter where you are
from, we're glad you're
our neighbor.

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سرور أن تكون جيراننا.

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