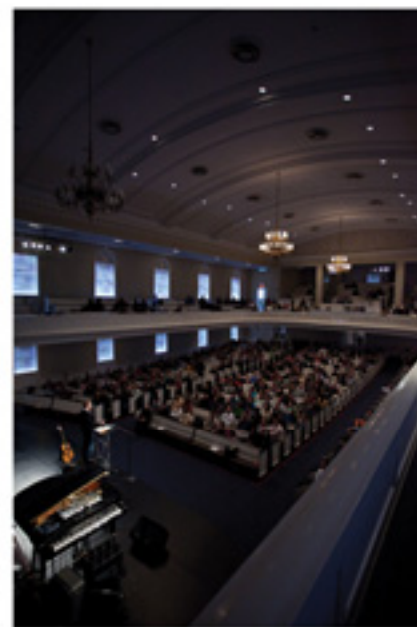
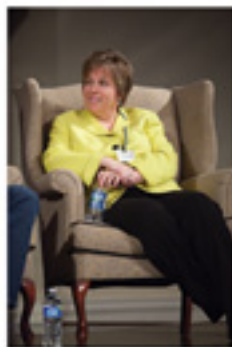
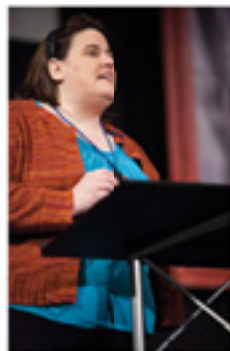


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A News Publication of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary





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Remembering orphans in their distress: Adopting for Life 2010

By JEFF ROBINSON, EMILY GRIFFIN AND GARRETT E. WISHALL

Russell D. Moore, Jedd Medefind, David Platt and a host of other speakers exhorted people to respond to the cry of the orphan and embody the Gospel by caring for the least of these at the 2010 Adopting for Life conference Feb. 26-27 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Andrew Peterson led worship for the event, which saw 600 attendees and representatives from more than a dozen churches and organizations populate Southern's campus to focus on adoption and orphan care.

Moore: recognize the face of Jesus in the least of these

Russell D. Moore said Christians should be driven to orphan care and adoption because we are those who should have been abandoned as rebellious sinners but who were instead found by a crucified and resurrected Messiah.

Moore, senior vice president for academic administration and dean of the School of Theology at Southern Seminary, recounted a conversation with his 8-year-old son, Benjamin. Benjamin was talking with Moore about his school project on Abraham Lincoln, which led into a discussion about the reality of slavery and its past presence in the United States. Benjamin was shocked at Moore's explanation of human slavery, segregation and the civil rights movement.

Benjamin's shock brought Moore to note that there are times when people cannot seem to recognize the wicked, evil and horrific things that are going on right in front of them.

"Why is it that it often takes an outside per-

spective for people to see what is going on in front of them?" Moore asked. "The power of the Gospel senses and exposes the consciences that are regenerate and the consciences that are sincere."

The question for all of us, Moore said, is when we are gathered and talking about orphan care, are we talking about something other than the Gospel? Moore said there was a time when a group of people could gather and say, "We are not going to worry about civil rights, because we are going to preach that

Christ was crucified. We are going to focus on the Gospel not on this social ministry."

If you are not standing up to people who are convinced they are superior to other people by virtue of the color of their skin, then you are not proclaiming the Gospel, Moore said. In the same way, if you do not care for orphans and stand up "for the least of these" as Jesus did, then you are not proclaiming the Gospel, he said, because preaching Christ and Him crucified means you must preach what it means to follow after Christ.

Moore said that in order to have Gospel-centered orphan care and adoption ministries, you cannot have the perspective that you are rescuing orphans from impoverished situations to bring them into the "blessing" of middle-class, American Christian life.

"That is not what Gospel-centered orphan care is. We are not the solution to the orphan crisis," Moore said. "The cross is the solution to the orphan crisis and the cross is the solution to our crisis."

As orphans who have been adopted by God and as crucified followers of a crucified Messiah, Moore said Christians should view orphan care and adoption as actions that

picture and embody the Gospel.

Moore said not everyone in the room was called to adopt or to start an orphan care ministry in their church or to lead mission trips to care for orphans. But he said everyone in the room was called to recognize the face of Jesus in the least of these. And everyone in the room was called to recognize that we are crucified people, ministering to a crucified *cosmos*, in the name of a crucified Messiah who nonetheless lives by the power of God.



Russell D. Moore — the father of four boys, two of which are adopted from Russia — hosted the 2010 Adopting for Life conference. *Photo by Devin Maddox*

Medefind: adoption is glorious, but count the cost

Adoption is the intersection of darkness and light in this world, a reality that should motivate potential adoptive parents to count the cost up front before adopting a child, Jedd Medefind said in the opening session of the conference.

Medefind serves as president of the Christian Alliance for Orphans, a ministry committed to uniting orphan-serving organizations with local churches to ignite passion and build excellence for orphan care, foster youth and adoption ministry. Medefind and his wife Rachel have four children, including an adopted daughter.

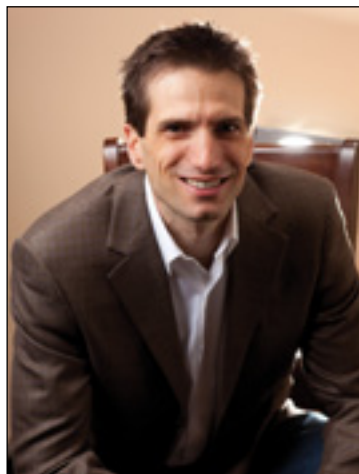
"I believe that God, through orphans, is beckoning us to the place where light and darkness collide," Medefind said. "Despite the great hope in this room, the bright smiles, our world knows great darkness."

And Medefind has witnessed that darkness in an Ethiopian orphanage.

Last year, when Medefind and his wife traveled there to bring home their adopted daughter, he walked past a young girl lying in a crib; her diaper had been dirty for hours and her face was covered with spit-up. There was no one there to clean her up. Though she was two years old, the girl was virtually an infant in her physical and mental development. Resisting the impulse to pass on by, Medefind picked her up and held her close. This encounter reminded him of the darkness that permeates our fallen world.

"This is the kind of world we live in that a little daughter of God would be laying there

See Adopting for Life, page 6.



Jedd Medefind — father of four, including an adopted daughter — was a keynote speaker for AFL 2010. *Photo by Devin Maddox*

TOWERS

Towers is published every two to three weeks, except during the summer and January terms, by the Office of Communications of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280.

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March 8, 2010, Vol. 8, No. 11.
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Postage paid at Louisville, KY.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Towers, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or e-mail towers@sbts.edu.

ISSUE INSIGHT

Observations on the GCR Task Force report

In my current roles, I have had the privilege of educating young SBC ministers, assisting state conventions in conferences, working alongside the North American Mission Board (NAMB) in training leaders and consulting with the International Mission Board (IMB) in theological education. Our denomination has much room for improvement, but I am more excited today about Southern Baptists than I have ever been — and the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) progress report is one reason for my excitement. Southern Baptists must still address a final report when meeting in Orlando in June 2010, but this progress report is filled with possibility and hope.

First, the report begins with a call to repentance over our disunity, arrogance, selfishness and caustic rhetoric. Southern Baptists have unfortunately assumed that our size is evidence of God's blessings on us, and seldom have we been accused of humility. The GCRTF report is a jolting call to repent of our belief that the evangelical world somehow revolves around us. We have no right to think such about ourselves.

Second, the report calls for a return to the primacy of the local church. A Great Commission Resurgence will occur only when local churches led by God-called pastors grieve over lostness and share the Gospel message *with people outside of the church*. That is, a GCR begins and ends with my personal willingness to be obedient to the GC task. Waiting for the denomination to "vote in" a resurgence is not only an abdication of personal responsibility; it is a guarantee that no resurgence will take place.

Third, the report calls for funneling more Cooperative Program funds to the task of international missions. A one percent increase may seem insignificant, but the increased dollars are both symbolic *and* real. For the first time in our denominational history, we will have affirmed that more than one-half of our cooperative giving goes to international missions. Moreover, a one-percent increase will surely result in more real dollars given to missions.

Fourth, the task force recognizes

that North America is changing and has challenged NAMB and the IMB to cooperate in reaching our continent. God is bringing the world to our continent — most often to our cities — where the Great Commission task is so large that both mission agencies will have much to do in assisting



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Dean of the Billy
Graham School
of Missions
and Evangelism
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our churches to reach our contexts. God alone knows how much more we could do if our agencies and entities worked together under a common vision rather than duplicating efforts and competing against each other.

Fifth, the report emphasizes the necessity of training missional leaders to reach our world. While the task force has proposed that NAMB and LifeWay share the duty to help "heighten our commitment to equip current pastors to missional leadership," all of us must accept this responsibility. As a seminary professor and dean, I can affirm that we are producing men and women who believe the Word. I fear, though, that we are not as intentional about producing strong missional leaders. Our graduates seldom struggle because their theology is bad, but they do not always know how to relate to their context as a mission field. Leaders with a healthy understanding of contextualization are a must if Southern Baptists are going to reverse our decline.

Sixth, the task force affirms the Cooperative Program while also celebrating "Great Commission Giving" beyond the CP. I am convinced that cooperative giving is still the best way to support the global cause of Christ, and I am grateful every day for the benefits I have reaped because of the Cooperative Program. At the same time, though, I rejoice as more local churches prayerfully and seriously seek the best way to support missions causes. A "both-and" approach to giv-

ing toward Great Commission causes (rather than "either-or" between the CP and Great Commission Giving) may well result in even more dollars supporting the work of missions at all levels of Southern Baptist life.

Seventh, the report calls for continued honest evaluation of our current work. Four billion people around the world have little or no access to the Gospel. More than 250 million people in North America are not believers. Meanwhile, Southern Baptists baptized no more in 2008 than we did in 1950. Honest, gut-wrenching, God-honoring evaluation of our structures, processes and programs is thus in order. This process is difficult and never-ending — but only through accountability can we improve our Great Commission efforts.

What, then, should we do in response to this progress report? Because Southern Baptists will be changed only through the power of God, prayer is a non-negotiable response. I invite you to join me in praying these prayers:

I pray that I will be ever aware of my own arrogance

As an older Southern Baptist, I must not get frustrated with younger Southern Baptists who are calling for change; instead, I must hear them even while helping them to stay properly focused. Younger Southern Baptists who continue to call for correction must do so with gratitude to God for the rich heritage of this convention. All of us must humbly pray for the Great Commission Task Force as they continue their work on this report.

I pray that I can genuinely say, "Not my will, but God's be done"

For some Southern Baptists, the suggestions of this report may go too far. For others, they may not go far enough. In either case, though, this report is not about what *I* want. Any unwillingness to change for the sake of the Gospel will result only in a retaining of the status quo — and the status quo will not work anymore for this denomination.

I pray that I will be patient with this process

The SBC will consider this report in Orlando in June, but any proposed changes will take time. Ours is a large denominational ship that is not turned quickly. Patience is imperative, as impatience can result in poor implementation of otherwise good plans. Now is not the time to jump ship because changes are not occurring quickly enough; instead, it is time to jump in, help us steer the ship and rejoice over every move in the right direction.

"A genuine GCR will begin when I pray for a lost world, give sacrificially to God's work and personally tell others about Jesus. A resurgence will grow as I disciple others to do the same."

— Chuck Lawless

I pray that the discussions at the SBC meeting in June will be God-honoring

Change is seldom easy, especially when structures and processes to which we have become accustomed are challenged. This report calls for an intense Great Commission focus that will require hard choices. I am praying now that the world will see us discuss the issues with fervor while still rallying around the Great Commission. Anything less will harm our witness.

I pray that the Great Commission Resurgence begins with me now

To be sure, this final prayer sounds "preachy." The point, though, is this: no report from any committee will in itself produce a Great Commission Resurgence. A genuine GCR will begin when I pray for a lost world, give sacrificially to God's work and personally tell others about Jesus. A resurgence will grow as I disciple others to do the same. To begin these tasks, I need not wait until the SBC gathers in June.

ISSUE INSIGHT

Cooperative missions and the Great Commission Resurgence

Reaching the people of North America with the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been a primary purpose of the Southern Baptist Convention since its beginning in 1845. Over the last 150 years and more, Southern Baptists have been working together to evangelize and plant churches throughout this continent.

Of course, reaching North America is a far larger task in terms of both geography and population than it was in 1845 — and far more complex as well. Looking to the future, Southern Baptists must make the adjustments that will focus our work in order to make maximum impact on this land.

The Great Commission Resurgence Task Force has this very much in mind as we hope to assist Southern Baptists to be even more faithful in this task. With that in mind, we are recommending changes in the assignment of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and changes in the way the board works with the state conventions.

Beginning in the 1950s, Southern Baptists began working with the state conventions through what were known as “cooperative agreements.” These agreements were undoubtedly a good idea, and they served well for many decades. The idea of the cooperative agreements is simple — NAMB (and originally, the Home Mission Board) established agreements with each state convention in order to avoid

overlap, confusion and duplication of work.

So, why is a change needed now? The answer is really very simple — the cooperative agreements are now outdated and confusing



R. Albert Mohler Jr.
President
Southern Seminary

to Southern Baptists. When the GCR Task Force recommends the phased elimination of these agreements, we are calling for NAMB to rethink how it should relate to the state conventions so that the mission board retains a more focused ministry of assisting Southern Baptist churches to reach North America.

In the year 2009, about \$50 million was routed through these cooperative agreements. Many of these dollars were spent on the salaries of workers in the state conventions and associations. The monies are currently allocated and channeled in ways that are difficult to trace, much less prioritize.

We are calling on NAMB to focus its energies on reaching North America, with a strategic concentration on unreached and underserved people groups, the cities and the

planting of healthy, reproducing churches. There is simply no way that Southern Baptists can be more effective and faithful in this task if we retain the funding mechanisms of the cooperative agreements.

Much of the impetus for this came from leaders of NAMB and others who have been hard at work in this task. The purpose is not to weaken relationships with the state conventions, nor to cut funding to effective programs and partnerships. The purpose is simple and well recognized by anyone who leads an enterprise: NAMB must have the ability to focus its energies and strategic mission funds on efforts that truly match the priorities of the board, as it serves Southern Baptists.

We are calling for NAMB to concentrate on its task assigned by the Southern Baptist Convention and to do so through the direct appointment of missionaries and church planters who are accountable to NAMB and deployed according to its national priorities. This echoes the call made by the convention when it adopted the Covenant for a New Century in 1995. This is the necessary next step.

This does not mean that Southern Baptists will abandon pioneer areas and under-served regions. To the contrary, we are calling for even greater efforts in these areas of our mission and work. But we do not believe that Southern Baptists expect NAMB to be primarily engaged

in replicating state convention structures and personnel.

NAMB will continue to work with state conventions, and to do so in partnership. But now is the time for a new partnership structure — a structure that liberates NAMB to do its work, while respecting the important work of the state conventions.

Will this mean change? Of course it will. But this is the kind of change necessary for Southern Baptists to step boldly into the future and to reach North America with the Gospel. This is not the 1950s, and the challenges of reaching North America in the 21st century will require far more of us than the current structures will allow.

NAMB and the state conventions both have essential roles to play in this, and we need a new spirit and structure for the partnerships that will take us into the future. With this step, NAMB will be ready to make the most of these partnerships, and to move into the future with greater flexibility, strategic focus and stewardship of missions resources.

In other words, we need something better than the cooperative agreements if we are to cooperate to the fullest. We are not living in the 1950s, and North America is waiting to see if Southern Baptists are serious about reaching this continent. I believe we are, and I can't wait to see how NAMB will lead us in this great task.

ISSUE INSIGHT

Grateful for brave leadership in the GCR task force

Recently I, along with a few thousand others, listened intently to Ronnie Floyd's report to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee on the Great Commission Resurgence. I have been praying over the last few months that God would move mightily in our midst as a convention.

The SBC is one of the strongest mission forces in the world. God has used us in the past to reach millions for Jesus. Unfortunately, we, like so many other “successful” organizations, were starting to believe our own hype. In recent years we have become less and less effective in fulfilling our mission mandate. We have seen decreasing baptisms resulting in a diminishing denomination.

As I watched the GCR task force report, I was extremely proud to be a cooperating member of this convention. I felt like for the first time in a long time we had a clear

and compelling vision for the future. I was reminded of Joshua 1:11, “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for *within three*



Aaron Coe
Lead Pastor of
The Gallery Church
New York City

days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess” (emphasis mine).

As the SBC we have a vision: the Great Commission. In his report, Floyd outlined a clear

pathway for how we will cooperate together to accomplish this vision as a convention.

There were a couple of things that really excited me about the report:

1. A re-focused North American Mission Board

Empowering the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to reach North America through a strong church planting strategy was especially encouraging. I live in a region where we estimate we need to plant 20,000 churches to reach the same population to church ratio as most other parts of the United States.

Allowing NAMB to phase out the cooperative agreements they have with the state conventions is a huge development. Most people don't realize that NAMB appoints very few national missionaries. Phasing out the cooperative agreements will allow for a more focused

and comprehensive strategy for reaching North America.

2. A renewed emphasis on the primacy of the local church

Churches are the only mission sending agency mandated by Scripture. Denominations and para-church organizations are most effective when they get behind churches and support them.

There are many other things that excited me about the report, too many to go into here. I was extremely thankful for Floyd mentioning New York City specifically. I really believe that if we reach New York we will impact the world. I am grateful for men like Floyd who recognize that.

The best days are ahead for our convention. I am glad to play a part.

Adopting for Life

Continued from Page 3.

like that 23 out of every 24 hours per day,” Medefind said.

Adopting an orphan brings light into the darkness, he said, a light that is glorious in all its Gospel implications. But adoption is also a pursuit that is fraught with difficulty. Those who are considering adopting a child must count the cost up front, he said.

“You will get some wounds if you do this,” he said. “This is a discipleship journey. Jesus told those who wanted to follow Him to count the cost. If we imagine we are exempt because we are responding to the call of God, we are going to be sorely disappointed . . . We can know that all will be well in the end, but between now and then, we can’t.”

When adoptive parents realize beforehand there may be unforeseen difficulties ahead, they are liberated to speak openly and boldly about the struggles, he said.

“Adoption is a beautiful thing, but we need not be just salespersons for adoption, for orphan care,” he said. “We need not be cheerleaders and end up like Toyota — trying to sell a product but pretend that problems are not



David Platt — father of two boys, one of which is adopted — was a keynote speaker at AFL 2010. Photo by Devin Maddox

happening. We need to never forget that every adoption began with a tragedy. We are embracing that just like Jesus embraced the world’s hurt and sorrow.”

Platt: As redeemed orphans act as redeemers to orphans, like Boaz to Ruth

David Platt worked from the story of Boaz and Ruth to demonstrate the resolve that is needed to carry out adoption a resolve that should be based on God’s redemption of us in Christ.

Speaking at a general session, Platt, lead pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala., noted that Ruth was a Moabite woman with no husband and no inheritance in the people of Israel, but the Lord worked in her life and brought her into the family line of Jesus.

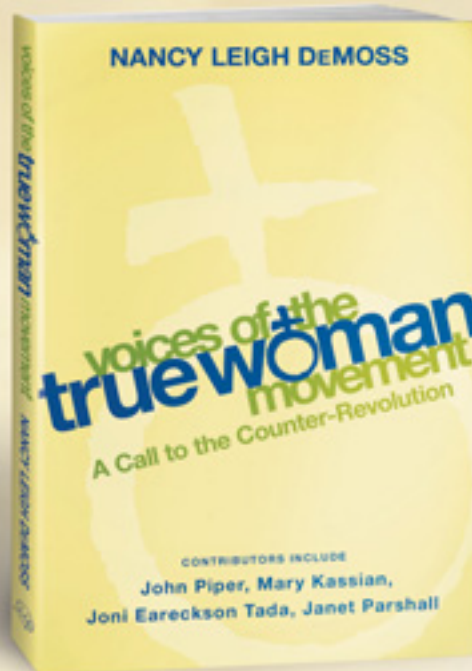
“This is not just a story about a Moabite woman being married to an Israelite man,” Platt said. “This is a story about a God who is sovereign over a people by His grace preserving a line that would lead to a king. And not just king David. In the lineage of Jesus Christ, you see the name Ruth.”

Chapter 4 of Ruth shows how the Lord worked through Boaz to redeem Ruth. Platt said Boaz had the right, resources and resolve to redeem her, all characteristics that parallel

the process of adoption. Platt said every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is like Ruth. And the action of the Lord to save people should be the impetus that drives all Christian adoption.

“Brothers and sisters, we are Ruth. Wandering and working in a field with absolutely nothing to draw anyone to us. Deserving of nothing and the Lord of the harvest has sought after you. He has stooped to save you from harm and in His pursuit of you He has redeemed you from your sin. He has invited you and me, the God of the universe, to be served by Him. To be shepherded by His grace because He alone has the right to redeem us. He has the resources to redeem us. He (Jesus) has divine authority over sin and death. And He, praise God, has the resolve to redeem.

“He has pursued you and taken up His cross, not because He had to, but because He loved obedience to His Father more than His own life. And He has not just taken up a wooden cross, He has taken your sin and my sin and put it on Himself and made a way for you and I to be called sons and daughters of the living God.”



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Thinking about adoption? Practical helps from AFL breakout sessions

Editor's note: Following is a series of vignettes taken from selected breakout sessions at the Adopting for Life Conference.

Here is the church and here are the people: Where does adoption fit in?

Kevin Ezell said an emphasis on adoption at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville has transformed the culture of the church.

"When you go to our church you see that we are very diverse," said Ezell, senior pastor of the Louisville church. "Adoption has changed the entire DNA, the total spirit, of our church, making it less self-focused and more focused on others. We are much more giving, a much more accepting church. The one word that would describe our transformation is 'acceptance.' Our people have learned firsthand how to accept and love people in a very practical way."

Addressing how adoption fits in to a local church's ministry, Ezell — who has six children, three biological and three adopted — said emphasizing adoption in one's church reaches far deeper than merely having a few families adopt children.

"For us, it has really become a part of fulfilling the Great Commission and opening people's eyes to see how they can minister to people all around them," he said. "And it has helped our people be more sensitive to the needs where they are."

One key way to develop an adoption culture in your church, versus just having an adoption ministry, is to prioritize ministry to children and students, Ezell said.

"We try to make it to where everybody can be a part of ministering to children," he said. "The biggest thing (in creating an adoption culture) is taking care of children, period."

Ezell said working with a local crisis pregnancy center or a local school are two ways members of your church can minister to children in addition to the church's official children's and youth ministries.

Adoption is also the focus of one of Highview's four quarterly combined-campus gatherings and Ezell said he specifically speaks on adoption at least twice a year from the pulpit. Highview also has an official adoption ministry in the church, which hosts quarterly meetings for people interested in adopting.

What about the birthparents? Justin Taylor on birthparents and the adoption process

Justin Taylor encouraged attendees to not forget ministry to the birth mother as a key element of the adoption process. Taylor, editorial director and associate publisher at Crossway Books, has adopted three children and reminded those considering adoption that the child is not the only person in need of ministry.

"It is very easy for us to get wrapped up in ourselves, in our own story and to forget that there is a birth mother who is hurting, who is created in the image of God and who wants the best for this child," he said. "She is not choosing abortion, she is choosing life."

"We need to constantly remind ourselves that we need to be driven by love for God and love for neighbor. And your neighbor is anybody who gets put in your path. To try and put yourself in the birth mother's shoes and see things from her eyes and be loving and sensitive to her (is important)."

Taylor focused on domestic adoptions, as all three of his adoptions have been domestic. He encouraged couples to use the questions "What does the Word say?" "What is the situation?" and "Who are the people involved?" to guide them in correctly applying scriptural principles.

The first thing adopting couples should have in mind is the glory of God, Taylor said.

"Is the option that I am choosing going to glorify and honor God? Is the way that I am responding and thinking about this a God-glorifying way of acting? Just asking the question is half the battle," he said.

Love of neighbor is a second key category to have in mind, Taylor said. Taylor reminded couples that each situation is different and exhorted them to trust in the sovereignty of God. He also noted that every situation, though different, will always involve sin and sinners.

"Don't be surprised if you experience suffering and if you come face to face with sin," he said. "You are sinful. So, what you have with every adoption is sinful people adopting a sinful child who was conceived by sinful parents. There is sin there and there is also grace for every moment. As beautiful as adoption is, we have to remember that if there was no Fall there would be no adoption."

Taylor briefly spoke of three different types of relationships with the birth parents — confidential, open or semi-open — and directed people to the website of Bethany Christian Services Adoption & Orphan Care Agency — www.bethany.org — for more details on those different options.

"But, don't you already have kids?" Randy Stinson on adding to your existing family

Adoption is not just for those who are unable to have biological children, it is for every follower of Christ, Randy Stinson said in his breakout session during the Adopting For Life conference.

Stinson and his wife Danna have six children, three of whom were adopted. Stinson, who serves as dean of the School of Church Ministries at Southern, said his family had sought to inculcate a culture of selflessness in the home, to that it would be natural to accept into the home new children, even those from different nationalities, as an outworking of the Gospel.

"God has a heart for the orphan, the widow and the homeless," he said "We communicated this to our children early; we don't always just want to be around other people who look just like us. We want to create a climate of 'others-centeredness,' where we try to out-serve each other.

"This is the way the church is supposed to look: people from every tribe and tongue and nation serving each other in the love of Christ. We want our home to look like that."

How are adoptive parents to handle relatives who do not quite understand or even disagree with the rationale for adoption and how far should parents who adopt internationally go to preserve their child's native culture?

Stinson said adoptive parents should be patient with extended family members, but ultimately, must not let them become an obstacle to adoption. With regard to the child's native culture, it definitely needs to be honored, but it should not be overemphasized, he said.

"You should not ignore their culture," he said. "But to try to maintain their culture seems to say to them, 'You're not one of us.' You certainly do not want to communicate that, but you want to say, 'You are one of us now. You are part of this family.' That is how the church is and we all bring something to the table and we all bring our story. The Gospel is what defines the church and the home."

Foreign Affairs: The sticky side of international adoption

Those who want to adopt a child from outside the United States must do much homework and become acquainted with the laws that govern the adoption process, said Bill Bistransky, chief for the Adoption Division in the Office of Children's Issues, Bureau of Consular

See *Thinking about adoption?*, page 14.

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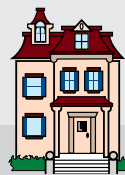
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with **Trent Hunter**



A cross section of the student body of Southern Seminary

Trent Hunter graduated from Southern Seminary in May 2009. Trent and his wife Kristi recently adopted Carson, 20 months and Madalyn, 16 months.

Hometown: St. Louis, Mo.

Spouse/years married: Kristi, 7 years.

What local church do you attend and how do you minister there?

The Hunters are members at Ninth & O Baptist Church, where Trent directs a young couples class alongside SBTS professor Stephen Wellum. Trent also directs Ninth & O's orphan care ministry, Rosalynn's Hope.

Why did you pursue adoption?

"Kristi and I spoke very early in our marriage about adoption as a way to magnify God's grace to us in the Gospel. But when we imagined our first children we imagined them coming to us through biological means. With time, trying and some testing, this longing was unfulfilled. Expectant but never expecting, we came to embrace infertility as a gracious providence of God to direct us to the adoption of orphans. In addition to imaging the Gospel and parenting children, adoption provided a way of fulfilling the Great Commission. That was compelling to us both."

Briefly detail your two adoptions:

"We decided to adopt in December 2007 and were paperwork-ready in April 2008. In August 2008 we learned about a three-month-old boy from the village of Wolisso named Henok. In November 2008 we found out about a three-week-old baby girl named Yabsira from the same village. Both children were born to mothers who loved them but who were unable to care for them. We traveled to receive Madalyn in August 2009, and Carson in February 2010."

What unexpected snags did you encounter in the adoption process?

"Snag-free adoption is an oxymoron. Our children's court cases were delayed by eight months when the government stopped renewing orphanage licenses. In answer to our prayers a license was secured, but in the intervening time we lost contact with Carson's mother, delaying his case until she was found. Madalyn's case passed in July 2009. Contact was reestablished with Carson's mother a month later. Carson passed court on Dec. 25, 2009."

Describe the impact adoption has had on you:

"In April 2009, two of our friends from college, Travis and Andrea, moved to Ethiopia to begin a translation project for a Bibleless language group. Months before their departure we discovered this connection through Facebook and had the pleasure of hosting the couple during their travels through Louisville.

"Of their own initiative, Travis and Andrea visited our children in Ethiopia. We received several multi-page narratives of their visits. We had photos of our children, but now we had stories of what they were like. During both of our trips to Ethiopia, Travis and Andrea hosted us. We are all confounded with the goodness of God to provide for our children's comfort and our mutual encouragement through this connection."

What would you say to couples considering adoption?

"If you believe the Gospel and desire to care for orphans through adoption, the rest is logistics. If you aren't sure, ask yourself what reasons you have not to adopt and say them out loud in prayer and in conversation with your spouse. Address those reasons through Scripture. Orphan care is for every Christian. Adoption is for some."



Tweetable features "tweets" from Southern Seminary faculty and other leaders in Southern Baptist life.

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<http://twitter.com/albertmohler>

@drmoore

1.) the day Jesus found me 2.) my wedding day 3.) my kids' arrivals 4.) today. Grateful. [tweeted during the Adopting for Life conference]

<http://twitter.com/drmoore>

@DanCruver

So grateful for the work of @drmoore, @DanDumas, @Robbie Sagers & Jeff Dalrymple. God's grace at AFL2010 was very evident. Wonderful weekend.

<http://twitter.com/DanCruver>

Bird illustration Copyright © 2009 Luc Latulippe



SBTS welcomes Collins' family: new missionaries in residence

By EMILY GRIFFIN

The missionary in residence program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is designed to provide an opportunity for Southern graduates to return to the seminary while on stateside assignment. Lee and Beth Collins are Southern's 2010 missionaries in residence and are looking forward to connecting with students and talking about the realities of serving on the mission field.

The Collins' have a wide range of field experiences: they've raised four children on the field, experienced serving in countries in extreme states of political unrest, dealt with the ravaging effects of communism and war and, most importantly, experienced the joy of taking the Gospel to the nations.

Explain how the Lord called you to missions:

(Lee) "Beth and I were very comfortable in our Christian walk. We were teaching Sunday school and I was serving our church as a deacon. I had been on several mission trips to Brazil and had been involved with home missions. The Lord began to work on both Beth and I simultaneously. One evening we both sat down together and shared that God had been working on our hearts and we both felt that we needed to go work cross-culturally; we both believed that the Lord was calling us to missions. The next morning we picked up the phone, called IMB (International Mission Board) and said 'here we are.'"

Your first assignment in Zagreb, Croatia. What can you tell us about that experience?

(Beth) "In 1998, when we first went to the field, we had 13, 9, and 2-year-olds and a 4-month-old baby. Our first priority was to learn the language and culture and make a home in our new surroundings. It was exciting and challenging all at the same time."

(Lee) "My primary assignment has been representing IMB in business and financial matters. I was in management in the grocery business prior to serving on the mission field. When we were appointed, there was a need for someone to come in and serve IMB and their personnel in Southeastern Europe. Zagreb was

the best location to meet that need. I served colleagues in nine countries: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Cypress.

"That was my day job. We spent our free time in the villages, which were very rural, and worked within the local church, preaching and discipling. We had the opportunity to be a part of two church plants there that are thriving and growing today."

Tell us about your second IMB assignment in Moscow, Russia:

(Beth) "Our first stateside assignment came in 2002 in South Carolina. During that time we wanted to be open to where we returned, asking the Lord to direct us. Our hearts were in Croatia but we were willing to go wherever the need was greatest."

(Lee) "Coming originally from South Carolina and then really enjoying Croatia, Russia was quite a change. It is just cold there, one time it snowed in June; it is just not supposed to snow in June."

"Moscow provided a glimpse into the lives of our Russian brothers and sisters, which is something that still sticks with us. We were worshiping with people who know what real persecution and suffering are. We were worshiping with ladies that still remember, very distinctly, when secret police came in and took their husbands away whom they haven't seen since. Watching the tears stream down their faces while we worshiped changed everything. These people still rejoiced and that was etched into our minds.

(Beth) "We walked each day among 17 million people; you could feel the oppression and affects of communism on the people. You really become aware for the need of the Gospel in such a dark and oppressive place."

How about your third IMB assignment?

(Lee) "In June 2005, we moved to Belgrade, Serbia. At that time the number one need in that part of the world was in Belgrade. Because of our previous connections to that part of the country, it was just like a call to home for us. While in Belgrade, I served as strategy coordinator of the city and was also given the opportunity to practice business as missions.

I became a third partner in a publishing company in the capital city.

"We worked to 'fan the flame' among the believers in the country. That time led to us working alongside the Baptist Union, and the opportunity to breathe life into the seminary there -- which was built decades ago by Southern Baptists. The seminary president is working towards remodeling the institution and getting it back to the academic standing that it should, and used to, have."

How has parenting and mission work coalesced for you?

(Lee) "Our children have never bucked any of our moves. Each time they have moved with us they have been so anxious to follow mom and dad and have understood the call to missions and what it means to take the Gospel to the nations.

"An important aspect was getting them involved in extracurricular activities. While we were in Croatia, Blaire played tennis and Carter played golf and learned to play guitar. Carter and Alex played basketball while we were in Serbia, and Alex and Anna have both played tennis. Getting them outside of the educational experience to have some time of their own has allowed them to find their own place in making friends, engaging the local community and culture; they were working under national instructors and communicating in the local language with their peers. Those were great experiences for them."

What effects did mission work have on your stateside extended family?

(Lee) "My mom and dad were Southern Baptists and were very missions-minded. So they had an awareness of missions. But giving up the grandchildren for so many years wasn't easy for them. They only saw the children during two furloughs and that was difficult."

(Beth) "This has been difficult as we see our parents grow older that we are missing out on the opportunity to care for them. We have the blessing of having siblings that can help care for our parents, but it isn't the same as caring for them yourself. Lee lost his mother in March and his father in December 2009. It has been an emotional year. These are the times on the field



Lee and Beth Collins with their two youngest children.
Photo by Devin Maddox

when it is so tough and then the Lord brings you back to the call; He grants you grace and knowledge that there is nowhere else that you want to be except where He has placed you."

What is next for the Collins family?

(Lee) "We will be returning to Southeastern Europe. I'll be serving as a logistics coordinator, which involves assisting colleagues with creative access, giving oversight of assets and providing other necessary support for personnel to be flexible and mobile in sharing the Gospel."

(Beth) "People often say 'thank you for all you've given up.' But one of things that we have learned is that by our going the blessing we have received is much greater than anything we have sacrificed. So thank you for allowing us to be the hands and feet that share the good news of the Gospel."

During their time as missionaries in residence, the Collins' are eager to talk with Southern students and spouses, the seminary community and local churches about serving with, or supporting, IMB work around the globe. For more information about meeting with them, contact the Billy Graham School of Missions and Evangelism.

Harmon not embarrassed to rap about his poetry

By TIM SWEETMAN

Tall and lanky, he ambled towards my table and slapped down his Bible, thin black notebook and his copy of the “Valley of Vision.”

Ladies and gentlemen, meet Spencer Harmon.

Surprisingly, this bright and amiable 18-year-old was once a shy child who wept and fled to the comfort of his mother’s knees each time his family sang “Happy Birthday.” Maybe it was the result of his father’s time away in the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm during Harmon’s first year on this earth or perhaps it was his super-sensitive ears.

Either way, things have changed.

Harmon grew up playing baseball, a sport he not only enjoyed but also excelled at. When Harmon was nine, his coach, who once played baseball for the Cincinnati Reds and just happened to room with the great pitcher Randy Johnson, possessed a team so impressive that Sports Illustrated considered dispatching a writer to cover their success.

His foray into sports continued through middle school and into his high school years. After middle school, Harmon ended his homeschooling years and entered the local high

school fully expecting to be a freshman starter for the varsity team. However, an injured arm forced him to quit baseball for one year.

It was during therapy and rehab he lost his passion for baseball.

“I remember going to my mom and saying to her ‘I’m done with baseball,’” Harmon said with a sheepish grin. She just gave a look that seemed to say she knew it might be coming to this.

“Are you *sure*?” she asked.

He was, and suddenly the dream that included scholarships and strikeouts ended. He walked into his coach’s office and broke the news: he wasn’t called to baseball.

He was called to the ministry.

And apparently it was to rap music as well.

Poems for posterity

“It was three weeks later that I came out with my first rap song,” Harmon told me. “I had been writing poetry since I was 12 years old.”

But he wasn’t very proud of it at the time.

“I thought writing poetry was really feminine,” he said. “So I would wait up at night and wait until my brother was asleep, turn on my book light, and I would hang my arm off the side of my bed and I would write poems.”

Before he knew it, he had an overflowing

black book full of embarrassing poems just waiting for posterity to discover.

“I remember thinking I really wanted to put these poems to beat, and I wanted to share them with people,” he said.

At first his idea was to simply use spoken word to share his work, but he talked to his DJ, Todd Banks, who gave him some beats — and Spencer Harmon’s first rap song was born. He found himself thrown onto a stage, which just happened to be at a youth conference with 5,000 people. Since then he has played shows in almost every state along the East coast, and has written and recorded five albums including *Empathy Apathy* (2005), *Empty Chairs LP* (2006), and is currently slated to release a conceptual album *Gypsy Project*.

“I’m no FLAME,” said Harmon, “but I try to stay faithful to the ministry through rap music.”

He’s been influenced by the likes of C.S. Lewis, John Piper and Ravi Zacharias. When it comes to writing, Spencer’s other passion, he loves Pulitzer Prize winning author Marilynne Robinson, Robert Frost and E.E. Cummings. Lately, the “Valley of Vision” has had a huge impact on both his music and life.

These days he’s excitedly preparing for the release of his conceptual album, *Gypsy Project*, which is written from the perspective of being a missionary in a village of gypsies and attempting to penetrate their hearts with the gospel — but this story doesn’t end like a fairy tale. He penned this album at age 17, but it had yet to be recorded until now.

Not spectacular

Harmon has had a lot of difficulty evaluating his musical interests and getting somewhere with his gifts, and the call to ministry that he says can keep him up at night.

“I’ll be doing one and thinking about the other,” he said, smiling. “But ministry is the main focus.”

Harmon has been dreaming of coming to Bible college since he was a freshman in high school, sitting in his friend Jon’s truck outside of his house, dreaming well into the morning about the days when they would come to Bible college and how incredible it would be. His dream finally came to fruition when he started at Boyce College last semester.

“I’ll still be in hermeneutics class and be thinking ‘I can’t believe I get to do this. I get to study the Bible. I get to go to *theology* class

and read Wayne Grudem and the Bible for homework.”

It keeps things in perspective for him, he said.

“This kind of school isn’t a place where you should complain. This is a big choice to come to a place like this ... If you are going to come here you should love what you do.”

“I’ll still be in hermeneutics class and be thinking ‘I can’t believe I get to do this. I get to study the Bible. I get to go to theology class and read Wayne Grudem and the Bible for homework.’”

All that to say, Harmon isn’t anything necessarily spectacular or new. But that certainly doesn’t mean he’s sitting on the bench watching the big-hitters swing.

“I think the Lord is saying to take the opportunities he gives you no matter how small they are,” Harmon said. The fear of being thought of as someone who only does good deeds for human praise often makes Harmon leery of doing small things that mean much. But even through his own failures each day, he is concerned about being faithful whether it is in his music, schooling, or just life in general.

For example, there are students at Boyce whom people don’t really *know*, Harmon said with deep concern in his voice. He wants to sit down with them and have meaningful and intentional conversations and encourage others to do the same.

“I don’t want talking about the Gospel to be an anomaly around here,” he said.

That includes putting that Gospel into action in the very small things in life, whether that is those intentional conversations, or simply thanking those who are serving him in the cafeteria.

To be sure, Harmon isn’t a “somebody.” But it is obvious that when he walks into a room and slaps down his Bible, notebook, and copy of the “Valley of Vision,” he is serious about his faith.

Above all, Harmon realizes this truth: “His faithfulness is greater than my faithfulness.”

For more information about Harmon visit Mypsace.com/spencerharmon

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Books old and new

By JEFF ROBINSON



“America: The Last Best Hope” by William J. Bennett (Thomas Nelson, \$49.99 for both volumes and CD)

Several years ago, being what my newspaper colleagues termed a “history buff,” I was tapped to teach a

short history seminar for undergraduate students to provide them with a general overview of American history. I began the first day with a simple five-question oral quiz that included the following questions: “Did the United States fight on the side of the Axis or Allies during World War II?” “In which century did the American Civil War take place?” “What is the identity of the man buried in Grant’s Tomb?” and “Name America’s first two presidents.”

I was stunned at the results: Only four of the 19 students answered more than two questions correctly. None got them all. My generation seems blissfully ignorant when it comes to U.S. history. This is tragic.

Enter William J. Bennett, secretary of education for the second term of the Ronald Reagan administration, author of a fine two-volume history of the U.S., titled “America: The Last Best Hope.” In roughly 1,000 pages, Bennett offers a lively account of the metanarrative of American history. Bennett writes engagingly and brings the great experiment that is America to life from the sailing of Columbus and other explorers to the establishing of the American colonies, the Revolutionary War, the framing of the Constitution, the Civil War, United States involvement in the two world wars up through the Cold War and into the 1990s.

While Bennett’s history portrays America’s struggle to uphold human liberty in a positive light, he also shows the less bright moments without the anti-American bias of left-wing revisionist history. Bennett’s first volume examines America from the first explorations of the North American continent in the 15th century and concludes on the brink of World War I. Volume II takes an in-depth look at the two great wars, the happy days era, the volatile 1960s and 70s and concludes with the early 1990s.



“Run to Win the Prize” by Thomas R. Schreiner (Apollos, \$14.99)

This volume, based on Schreiner’s lectures at the Twelfth Oak Hill Annual School of Theology, explores the meaning of the warning passages in the New Testament and the role they play in a believer’s perseverance in the faith. The 126-page book is a smaller version of a much fuller book on the warning passages co-written by Schreiner and Ardel B. Caneday in 2001 titled, “The Race Set Before Us: A Biblical Theology of Perseverance and Assurance.”

As the title suggests, Schreiner argues that the Christian life is, as Bunyan expresses it so well in “The Pilgrim’s Progress,” like a marathon race which the believer must run all the way to the end to be saved. He asserts that warnings, like those found throughout Hebrews,

are designed as means that God uses to cause believers to persevere in the faith; the genuine believer cannot fall away and he will persevere by God’s grace, but he must run for it.

Early in “Run to Win the Prize,” Schreiner interacts with other views of warning passages such as the Arminian case that genuine believers can lose their salvation and another popular view which asserts that the warning passages point to the mere loss of rewards in heaven. Seeing the warning passages as they really are, Schreiner argues, promotes the holiness of life that Scripture calls believers to. Schreiner believes the rewards in view in the New Testament such as “the crown of life” are always eternal life: “NT authors did not promise an eschatological reward regardless of how someone lived in the future. Instead, we have seen that both new believers and experienced believers are urged to persevere to receive eternal life ... this was commonplace in the New Testament.”

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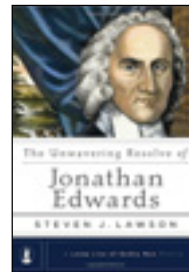
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“Marriage to a Difficult Man: The Uncommon Union of Jonathan & Sarah Edwards” by Elisabeth D. Dodds (Audubon Press, \$14.99)

With a novelist’s flair and a scholar’s employment of the sources, Dodds provides a memorable account of the marriage and family life of Jonathan and Sarah Pierpont Edwards. The book details the Edwards’ courtship and marriage as well as the daily challenges of raising 11 children. Along the way, both great strengths and clear weaknesses in Edwards as a father, husband and pastor emerge. The sum total is a refreshing look at a figure and a time, both of which are far too often romanticized and idealized.

Dodds strives to set forth the issues the Edwards’ faced within the home each day in 18th century colonial America. Writes Dodds, “This is no attempt to reread the many biographies of Edwards ... I have stressed a side of Edwards that is not generally known. The mythic picture of him is as a stern theologian. He was in fact a tender lover and father whose children seemed genuinely fond of him. To probe this marriage, however, is to discover that this was not just a radiant idyll. Here were two exceedingly complex people.” Dodd probes those complexities in a manner that puts a far more human face on Edwards and his godly wife, Sarah.



“The Godly Home” by Richard Baxter, ed. Randall J. Pederson (Crossway, \$17.99)

Crossway has done families a great favor in making available an important section on ministry in the home from Puritan pastor Richard Baxter’s “Christian Directory.” “The Godly Home” is a complete guide to the home that begins with Baxter’s biblical directions for marriage and then extends to the worship of God within families.

Baxter follows the structure of families in Ephesians 5 to set forth duties of fathers, mothers, children and youth and concludes with a section on “right directions for teaching children.” Though Baxter’s directory was originally written for a 17th century audience, it provides proof that God’s truth transcends the passage of time. Here is a brief example of the excellent advice that Baxter gives to parents with regard to teaching children: “Cause your children to learn the words (of a catechism or Scripture), though they are not yet capable of understanding the matter. Do not think as some do that this is to make them hypocrites and to teach them to take God’s name in vain; for it is neither vanity nor hypocrisy to hemp them first understand the words and signs in order to [develop] their early understanding of the matter and signification.”

Floyd presents GCR task force 'progress report' to SBC Executive Committee

By JAMES A. SMITH SR., executive editor of the Florida Baptist Witness

When Southern Baptists meet in Orlando in June they will be faced with the choice of retreating to the past, preserving the present or rising to a future of advancing the Gospel to the nations, Great Commission Resurgence Task Force (GCRTF) Chairman Ronnie Floyd told the SBC Executive Committee meeting Feb. 22 in Nashville.

During the 90-minute presentation, Floyd said the GCRTF is offering six "components" of a "new and compelling vision for the future:"

1. A "missional vision" with eight "core values."
2. A "reinvented" North American Missions Board (NAMB).
3. The authorization of the International Mission Board to work in North America.
4. Movement of the ministry assignment for Cooperative Program (CP) promotion and stewardship from the Executive Committee to state conventions.
5. Affirmation of the current CP as the "central means of supporting Great Commission ministries," while creating a new category of "Great Commission Giving."
6. Increase of the IMB's CP budget share by one percent by cutting the Executive Committee's budget by the same percentage.

Floyd noted that the task force has received 137 specific recommendations, receiving "vast correspondence" from Southern Baptists. The task force website has 6,128 prayer partners from 1,574 cities, 49 states and 30 countries.

Missional vision

Southern Baptists will be asked to endorse a "Missional vision and to begin to conduct ourselves with core values that will create a new and healthy culture" in the SBC, Floyd said.

The vision: "As a convention of churches, our missional vision is to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations."

Asserting, "we need to learn how to get along with each other," Floyd said the task force is recommending eight "core values" of Christ-likeness, truth, unity, relationships, trust, future, local church and kingdom that will "Articulate what we stand for, how we should work together, how we govern our personal relationships and how we should be guided in making decisions."

NAMB "Reinvented and released"

Floyd spoke at length about a "Reinvented

and released" NAMB, arguing for a prioritization of church planting and clarification of NAMB's leadership in North American missions, including the "Appointment of direct missionaries."

The task force desires that "at least 50 percent" of NAMB's work be focused on church planting, Floyd said, with priorities given to the cities because 200 million Americans live in the nation's top 100 metropolitan regions and 80 percent of Canada's 33.7 million residents live in metropolitan regions.

Floyd said "Stark realities" need to be addressed, including the fact that two-thirds of Southern Baptists' CP money is spent on the one-third of the U.S. population, mostly in the South, while one-third of CP is spent in the region of America where two-thirds of the population lives.

Among "Needed specifications" for NAMB, the GCRTF believes NAMB should be "Streamlined" and "Decentralized" with seven regional offices, and "Must be released to budget for a national strategy."

The GCRTF will urge the SBC to grant NAMB the "Freedom to budget for a national strategy," with the state convention cooperative agreements phased out over a four-year period at 25 percent per year, and the "State conventions will manage their budgets accordingly."

IMB work in North America

Because "Globalization has flattened the world," Floyd said the task force recommends a "Bold and needed change" of allowing the IMB to "Reach the unreached and underserved people groups without regard to any geographic limitations," permitting the IMB to operate in North America for the first time.

"Most of the 586 people groups that do not speak English in the United States have strategy coordinators working overseas with the same groups," Floyd said. "With geographical limitations removed, a new synergy can be created in international missions."

Floyd expressed confidence that IMB and NAMB can coordinate work in North America without duplication.

Moving CP promotion, stewardship from EC back to states

Calling state Baptist conventions "Great Commission partners," Floyd said the GCRTF believes the ministry assignment for Cooperative Program promotion and stewardship should be returned to the states, since they are "Closer to our churches" and historically the states had this assignment.

Since 1997, the SBC Executive Committee has held the CP promotion assignment, and later was given the stewardship assignment.

Reaffirmation of CP definition, creation of "Great Commission Giving" category

Floyd said the GCRTF will ask Southern Baptist to "Reaffirm" CP without redefinition as "Our central means of supporting Great Commission ministries," while also celebrating Southern Baptist churches' gifts to "Great Commission Giving" beyond the CP.

Churches will give more through CP, Floyd said, "When they are presented a compelling Gospel vision that will result in global advance."

Great Commission Giving will include CP giving and designated gifts to the SBC, states or associations.

Increase IMB CP percentage share to 51, reduce EC budget

Calling it "Both symbolic and substantial," Floyd said the GCRTF recommends the SBC increase the IMB's share of the CP budget from 50 to 51 percent in the 2011-2012 budget, with the additional percentage point to be funded by reducing "Facilitating ministries" of the Executive Committee budget by one percent.

The funds of the EC budget's facilitating ministries will be made available by the re-assignment to the state conventions of the Cooperative Program promotion and stewardship, he said.

"This means for the first time in our history, more than one-half of all monies that come from our churches through the SBC Cooperative Program will go to the reaching of the nations," Floyd said.

GCRTF member Roger Spradlin, pastor of Valley Baptist Church in Bakersfield, Calif., and vice chairman of the Executive Committee, told his fellow EC members he endorses the change and urged their support of it.

"I really hope that this next year that we will look at the budget with fresh eyes and that we will find a way, somehow ... to allocate at least 51 percent to the IMB for the very first time," Spradlin said.

With no action requested or needed, the Executive Committee meeting was the stage for the report. Floyd noted the final report of the body will be posted to the GCRTF website: www.pray4GCR.com on May 3.

To read Smith's entire story, visit www.gofbw.com/news.asp?ID=11395&fp=Y.

Newsbriefs

Quake 'without parallel' in Chile's history

Southern Baptists have released \$50,000 for immediate relief needs in Chile, where the death toll has climbed past 700 in an earthquake disaster described by the country's president as "without parallel in Chile's history." A Southern Baptist assessment team is en route to the country for dialogue with ministry partners about needs and on-the-ground evaluation of the damage caused by the 8.8-magnitude earthquake that struck in the pre-dawn hours Feb. 27. (BP)

150,000 Buckets of Hope estimated

Organizers of the "Buckets of Hope" initiative for Haiti relief estimate that 150,000 food buckets will be shipped to Port-au-Prince to help combat hunger in the earthquake-devastated country. Several state conventions have announced a goal for the number of buckets their state's church members will contribute including Kentucky with 10,000 buckets; Tennessee with 7,000 buckets; the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia with 6,000 buckets; Louisiana, Georgia and South Carolina with 5,000 buckets each; Arkansas with 4,000; and New Mexico with 2,100. Southern Seminary will serve as the final collection point for the North American Mission Board's "Buckets of Hope" program in the state of Kentucky. The exact dates volunteers will be needed at Southern have not been finalized, but it will be sometime between March 11 and March 25. (BP)

NAMB president search to gear up, chairman reports

The search for the next North American Mission Board president will accelerate now that the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force has issued its preliminary report during the SBC Executive Committee's Feb. 22 meeting in Nashville, Tenn. Ted Traylor, chairman of NAMB's presidential search committee, said during the quarterly meeting of the mission board's trustees Feb. 17 that the search for a president would accelerate once the GCRTF report was delivered.

"At our next search committee meeting in March, we'll start looking high and low for God's man for NAMB," Traylor said. "It's a key time in the life of the convention — with a new CEO coming in Nashville [at the Executive Committee], a new IMB president, a new NAMB president and a new president of the convention [to be elected in Orlando in June]." (BP)

Nickels and dimes, millions of times: Southern Seminary energy conservation strategy to save thousands

By EMILY GRIFFIN

Dan Diffey looks at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary differently than most students and staff members. Most admire the campus' stately buildings, the inspiring steeple of Alumni Memorial Chapel and Southern's manicured grounds. Diffey looks around and sees the "on" light of unmanned computers, air conditioning units working in overdrive and light bulbs burning bright. Ultimately, he sees money being tossed away.

In August 2009, Diffey joined Southern's operations department as the energy education specialist, a position that allows him to explore the SBTS campus and find ways to make it more energy efficient. Last year the campus administration adopted a collection of energy management guidelines and Diffey was brought on board to facilitate those guidelines.

"Our ultimate goal is to save money," Diffey said. "It is all about being good stewards of our money and being better stewards of our environment — which is important."

Diffey — who jokingly refers to himself as Southern Seminary's "Energy Tsar" — works

directly with representatives of Energy Education, a company responsible for creating and helping implement customized energy conservation programs for K-12 school districts, institutions of higher education and large churches.

In 2009, Southern entered a multi-year partnership with Energy Education to learn how to heighten efficiency and ultimately save budget funds.

Diffey reports that with the support of Sodexo, and the campus community, Southern is planning on saving at least 20 percent on 2010 energy expenditures with these new energy conservation initiatives, which equates to hundreds of thousands of dollars in savings.

"In the first six months of the program we've saved more than \$115,000," Diffey said. "And we're about to step up into even more cost savings."

"In the first phase of the program we've focused on some big things, like making sure that were only heating and cooling facilities when needed and making sure that we're not keeping lighting on when unnecessary. The Chapel for instance, costs more than \$2 per hour to light, that doesn't sound like much,

but that is about \$50 a day, which computes to over \$15,000 a year to light the chapel. If no one is using that facility, we should keep those lights off."

Diffey is starting to focus on smaller things, like asking employees to turn their computers off at the end of the work day and turning lights off when rooms and offices are empty, which will compute into thousands of dollars in savings.

"If every individual would turn their com-

puter off when they leave for the evening they would each save the seminary between \$150 and \$300 each year. We have enough employees for that to mean saving thousands of dollars each year," Diffey said.

For specific energy management guidelines, read the whole story at: <http://news.sbts.edu/2010/03/04/nickels-and-dimes-millions-of-times-sbts-energy-conservation-strategy-to-save-thousands/>

HISTORY HIGHLIGHT:

The inauguration of Duke K. McCall as SBTS president

By STEVE JONES

On March 11, 1952, Duke K. McCall was inaugurated as Southern Seminary's seventh president. McCall began serving in that position in September of the previous year following the unexpected death of his predecessor, Ellis A. Fuller. He entered the office at the age of 36 as the youngest president of the seminary up to that point, and would leave office as the president with the longest tenure in the history of the seminary.

McCall had already served extensively as a pastor and leader in the Southern Baptist Convention prior to accepting Southern's presidency. After graduating from Southern with a Ph.D in 1941, he served as pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville for eight years. He then went on to serve as the president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and as executive secretary of the Executive Committee of the SBC.

The March 11 inaugural ceremonies were well attended and representatives of Yale, Princeton and many other influential universities and theological schools were on hand. In his inaugural address, McCall spoke concerning the responsibility of the seminary to its students and to Southern Baptists as a denomination. He highlighted the need for the seminary to train its students in Baptist distinctives, spiritual devotion and the clear and effective communication of truth. He concluded by stating that, "It is the task of a seminary not to say what God should have said or what God would say, but simply to chip away the barnacles which accumulate about what God did say. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary belongs to the denomination. Above that, it belongs to the truth — the truth, but especially to the revelation of God. We commit ourselves without reservation to proclaiming and to preparing men to proclaim the word of God."

McCall set about leading Southern Seminary to fulfill these responsibilities during his tenure as president, which spanned into four decades, from 1951-1982.

To learn more about Duke K. McCall, the presidents of the seminary or other archival resources available to you at SBTS, visit archives.sbts.edu.

ENDNOTES

¹Ashley P. Cox, "President McCall Inaugurated," *The Tie*, March 1952, 7.



Duke K. McCall signing the Abstract of Principles at his inauguration with Dr. J. Clyde Turner, president of the seminary Board of Trustees, looking on. March 11, 1952.

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Thinking about adoption?

Continued from Page 7

Affairs at the U.S. Department of State.

Potential adoptive parents must be particularly aware of what Bistransky called “the legal trio:” a group of local, federal and international laws that must agree before adoption can move forward:

Laws of the child’s country of origin. Each country has the authority to regulate adoptions out of and into it and each country’s process is different and moves at a different pace, Bistransky said, so patience will be required.

U.S. federal laws and regulatory agencies, including: the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), Inter-country Adoption Act (IAA), the Child Citizenship Act (CCA), the Department of State Regulations and the Department of Homeland Security Regulations.

U.S. state laws and regulations that govern adoption.

Bistransky said one excellent Internet resource is adoption.state.gov.

The land of the free and the brave: the nuts and bolts of domestic adoption

Dan Dumas, senior vice president for institutional administration at Southern, provided a big picture roadmap for the process of domestic adoption. Dumas also serves as a teaching pastor at Eastside Community Church in Louisville. Dumas and wife Jane have two sons, both of whom were adopted.

Dumas provided 13 basic guidelines for domestic adoption:

Get your theology in order. Dumas said, “As you preach the Gospel to yourselves every

day, you need to preach the sovereignty of God in the context of adoption.” The entire process is a test in patience and perseverance. Adoptive parents must learn to trust God.

Assess your family’s will. There are many questions to ask throughout the adoption process: Will you adopt a special needs child? How many children will you adopt? What race or gender will you adopt? You need to pre-determine how far you will go, and the heat of the moment is not the time to decide.

Research your options. You need an attorney who specializes in adoptions. This will be extremely helpful throughout the entire process. There are many options in domestic adoption: foster care to adoption, private domestic adoption and a domestic adoption agency.

Own the whole process.

Pray without ceasing.

Go public with your intentions. The more people you tell, the more they can help you. Use every outlet you have to tell people your interest in adoption (social media, friends, family, church)

Pursue good coaching. Find other couples who have gone through the process previously and glean from their experiences.

Get your economic house in order. Do not allow the cost to scare you, because these costs do not all come at the same time. But it is important to be a good steward of the resources that God has given you. The average cost of a domestic adoption is \$7,000-\$30,000.

Complete a full home study. A home study is a deliberate and substantive process, Dumas said. He recommended that adoptive parents

keep an “active home study” so they are always ready to adopt more children if the need arises, or if they feel led to adopt again.

Be patient and not demanding. Adoptive parents have to be sensitive to the birth parents and recognize that this is often a hard thing for them to do.

Deploy the full armor of the law. Good legal counsel is extremely helpful and will be a blessing to you as you adopt.

Wrestle with open adoptions and visitations.

Stay engaged in the orphan care process.

Every tribe and nation: the nuts and bolts of international adoption

Mark Tatlock, senior vice president and provost at The Master’s College, Santa Clarita, Calif., provided an overview of international adoption.

“There is a place for all of us to serve on the front lines regarding orphan care and caring for vulnerable children. It is not just about adoption,” Tatlock said.

Throughout church history, pastors have led their congregations in the care of orphans, widows and the poor. It is only in the last 100 years, that the North American church has seen a shift away from that, he said.

There have been things put in place to protect the fatherless throughout the adoption process. One of these, Tatlock explained, is the Hague Convention on International Adoption. The Hague Convention has two primary goals: to get children out of institutions and to prevent child abuse and trafficking. There are 198

standards that Hague Convention countries must adhere to. It is possible to adopt from a non-Hague convention country, but they will have not adhered to the 198 standards.

God’s generous ministries: church adoption funds and innovative adoption funding

When Andrew Lehman and his wife began the process of adopting their son, Caleb, the financial burden seemed insurmountable. “It cost half of my annual salary,” Lehman said. “\$22,000 is a lot of money and I had only \$2,000 in the bank.”

Yet as the months went by, Lehman saw more clearly the meaning of Jehovah-Jireh: “The Lord Will Provide.”

Lehman is the vice-president of Lifesong, an organization that seeks to mobilize the church to support adoption. Lehman explained some of the funding options available to families who wish to adopt:

Federal Adoption Tax Credit. The Federal Adoption Tax Credit (set to expire in December 2010) grants a tax credit of up to \$12,650 per child to families for unreimbursed “Qualified adoption services.” If a couple’s tax liability is less than the tax credit, the couple has up to five years to regain the full amount of tax credit.

Interest-free loans. The ABBAS Fund and other organizations offer loans to help couples overcome the initial costs of adoption expenses, most of which need to be paid up front. Couples usually sign a covenant agreement to repay the loan.

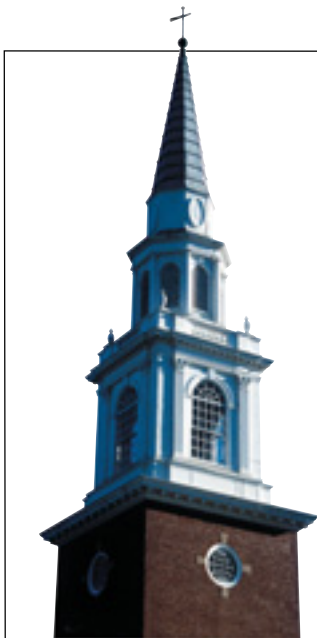
Direct grants. Organizations like Show Hope offer grants to families who wish to adopt. The amount of the grant may vary depending on the availability of funds and the number of applicants.

Church adoption funds. As Christians regain an interest in adoption, more churches are beginning to establish adoption funds.

Matching grants. Lifesong and other organizations offer matching grants of \$1,000-\$4,000 for adoptive families. These grants motivate churches to come alongside adopting families, thereby creating a prayer network and increasing interest in adoption.

Fundraising. Many families who adopt will need to ask churches, family, friends and others in the community for financial aid. In these situations, families may also turn to organizations like Lifesong for assistance in establishing an account to receive tax-deductible gifts.

Jeff Robinson edited and contributed to this story. Garrett E. Wishall, Courtney Reissig and Rachel Houston also contributed to the story.



CHAPEL SCHEDULE 10 A.M.

Tue., March 9

R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.
President
Southern Seminary

Thu., March 11

PANEL DISCUSSION
MODERATOR:
R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.
President
Southern Seminary

Tue., March 16

OPEN FORUM
WITH THE PRESIDENT
R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.

Thu., March 18

JOSHUA HARRIS
Senior Pastor
Covenant Life Church
Gaithersburg, Md.

Previous chapel messages available
at www.sbts.edu/resources/.

Announcements

'The Albert Mohler Program'

"The Albert Mohler Program," a daily radio show hosted by R. Albert Mohler Jr., can be heard from 5-6 p.m. on WFIA-FM 94.7 or as a live webcast at www.AlbertMohler.com. Previous broadcasts of the nationwide program may be accessed at the web site and are also available as a podcast. Anyone is invited to call the show toll free, 877-893-8255, or to e-mail mail@albertmohler.com with questions and comments.

Free sewing class

The free sewing class led by Mrs. Barbara Gentry meets from 6-7:30 p.m. on Mondays in Fuller Room 16. Sewing machines are provided at no cost. No experience is required, but women with experience may also participate. Knitting and crocheting lessons will also be offered. Mrs. Barbara Gentry leads the class, assisted by Mrs. Kathy Vogel. For questions, you can call Mrs. Gentry at 380-6448 or Mrs. Vogel at 742-1497.

Women's Auxiliary scholarship

Women committed to a Christian vocation are eligible for the Women's Auxiliary scholar-

ship and must apply by the standard financial aid deadline of April 15. Applicants will be interviewed and evaluated based on financial need. Applicants must carry at least a "B" grade average, be a member of a local Southern Baptist church and be a full-time student with at least nine credit hours. In addition, applicants must become a member of Woman's Auxiliary, and attend at least three required Woman's Auxiliary meetings. Applications are available online at <https://\finaid.sbts.edu>. For more information, call the Financial Aid office, at ext. 4206.

SBTS hosts Taylor University Chorale

Southern Seminary is hosting the Taylor University Chorale for a concert at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 11 in Alumni Memorial Chapel. The 60-member vocal ensemble performs such works as Mozart's "Coronation Mass," "Chichester Psalms" by Bernstein and Faure's "Requiem." Taylor is an interdenominational Christian liberal arts college in Upland, Ind. The concert is free and is open to the public.

Brunch for potential church planters with North American Mission Board representatives

If you are a church planter or are interested

in becoming one, the North American Mission Board will be hosting a free brunch during Great Commission Week from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 23 in Honeycutt Room 246. The NAMB representatives will conduct a question and answer time, allowing students to learn more about the application process and serving with NAMB. If you are interested in attending, RSVP by **Monday, March 15** to the Church Planting Center at 502-897-4498 or churchplanting@sbts.edu.

Music lessons available at Southern Seminary School of the Arts

Registration is open for spring music lessons at Southern Seminary. The Seminary School of the Arts offers private instruction at all levels in voice, guitar, violin, bass, piano, organ, banjo, trumpet, clarinet, saxophone and more. The school also offers a Suzuki violin program and the seminary youth orchestra and youth choir programs. For registration forms and information, contact Aarica Myers at ext. 4115 or amyers@sbts.edu or Esther Crookshank at ext. 4507 or ecrookshank@sbts.edu.

Ministry Resources

Ministry position postings

Full-time and part-time ministry positions may be found on e-campus through the help desk's link to Ministry Resources.

Résumé service

Start or update your résumé file with Ministry Resources by submitting our on-line candidate form. Visit the Church Resources quick link on www.sbts.edu for the simple instructions. The office is also eager to counsel you over your resume and ministry preferences. Visit Norton Room 150 or call ext. 4208.

International Mission Board opportunities

International Mission Board candidate consultant Jim Riddell will be on campus March 22-26 to interview students interested in missions opportunities with the IMB. To schedule an interview, call Joan Ivey at 1-800-765-0011. Riddell will also meet informally with drop-ins at Founders' Café from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Wednesday, March 24.

Ministry opportunities with Tennessee Baptist Convention

Bill Northcutt and Richard Skidmore of the Tennessee Baptist Convention will host 50-minute student forums about ministry opportunities at 2:30 p.m., March 16 and 10

and 11 a.m., March 17 in HCC 222. To sign up, contact Mrs. Jewell Burke at jburke@tnbaptist.org.

Health and Rec

The Health and Recreation Center (HRC) will be open regular hours during the spring semester: M-F — 6:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Sat. — 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Aerobics schedule

- Fitness Boot Camp M, W & F 8-8:45 a.m.
- Mommy and Me Power Walking M & F 10-11 a.m., W 9-9:45 a.m.
- Practical Pilates M, T, & R 4:45-5:45 p.m.
- Aqua Alive T & R 5-5:45 p.m.
- Fitness childcare, 4:30-6:15 p.m., T & R, \$3 per child.

Children's programming

Kids Fit M & R 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Motor Skills T 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Gym closings

F & S, March 19 & 20

Both Gyms will be closed for the Give Me An Answer high school conference.

Intramural volleyball

Co-ed volleyball takes place at 6:30 p.m. every Monday at 6:30 in the Main Gym.

Flag football

Registration ends for flag football Tuesday, March 9.

Register at the HRC front desk in HCC 246 or by email to hrc@sbts.edu.

Games begin at 10 a.m., Saturday, March 13.

Couples Cornhole tournament

7 p.m., Saturday, March 13.

Register at the HRC front desk in HCC 246 or by email to hrc@sbts.edu.

Parent's Night Out

9 a.m., Saturday, March 20.

Registration for Parent's Night Out begins. Register at the HRC front desk.

6:30-9:30 p.m., Friday, March 26

Parent's Night Out

- Call the HRC at 897-4720 with questions about scheduling and events.



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3 Questions WITH

Andrew Peterson
*Christian Singer
and Songwriter*

1 *What does song writing and album creating look like for you?*
 MAKING A RECORD for me is different every time, but there are things about the process that are consistent. Community is really important to me. I try hard to use the same people from record to record. So, Ben Shive and Andy Gullahorn for the last two albums have basically produced the album. I feel very comfortable putting my songs into their hands. We have co-written a lot of stuff. One great value in them producing our stuff is that when we play a concert, I want it to sound like the CD. I want people to be able to recognize what we are doing. If you are going to spend that much time on the road with somebody it is important to nurture a kinship and community.

What is fun is in Nashville, where we live, there are studios everywhere. The way people make records now is you basically bring your hard drive from house to house, plug it in and use whatever computer set up this guy has in his basement and you record that thing. Then you go to the drummer's house and record the drums, etc. The problem with that is we are all married and have kids and our homes are in Nashville. So, when we are making a record in Nashville it takes a long time because we have to break for dinner. So, we just finished an album that we made in Washington state. We love our wives and our children, but we needed to not let this record take four months. So instead we flew everybody to Washington and holed up in the mountains in a studio and emerged nine days later with a record.

2 *What is your mindset when you step onto a stage to perform at a concert?*
 I USED TO pray before concerts, "Lord, keep us humble and help these songs to move people." I still pray that, but in addition I pray, "Lord, help me to be funny as I do that. Please help me to make these people laugh." I have come around to the fact that part of my job is to entertain people. I don't want people to be bored and I don't want to be a downer. A lot of these people are having a hard time, so if I can make them laugh that is a ministry, too.

My mindset is to do my best to serve the audience, to be sensitive to what it is I feel that they need. So, we plan a loose set list from night to night. I call audibles the whole time and Ben and Andy just follow as best they can. We aren't flippant with our planning, but we also try to be sensitive to the audience.

3 *Who are two or three people who have been influential in your life in your spiritual growth, i.e. growth in Christlikeness?*
 MY BUDDIES BEN and Andy. This community that I am part of with them is great from a peer standpoint. I think it is important also to have people in your life who are older and wiser than you who have walked the road that you are walking. Michael Card is one of those guys for me. We have had some long, good talks. He has a lot to say about being a young man who is a songwriter in the Christian music industry: he knows a lot about that.

My family is a huge influence on me, too. I feel like I am a better man when I am with my wife and my kids. They are the people through whom God speaks to me the most. When I am around them I feel like I know who I am in a way that I don't when I am not.



E.Y. Mullins Lectures on Preaching

MARCH 30 – APRIL 1, 2010

DR. BRYAN CHAPPELL

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

10:00–11:00 a.m. Alumni Chapel

"Use for Useless Heroes" – Judges 7

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

10:00–11:00 a.m. Heritage Hall

"Holiness in Heaven's Plan" – Daniel 2

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

10:00–11:00 a.m. Alumni Chapel

"Hope's Journey" – Romans 15:4