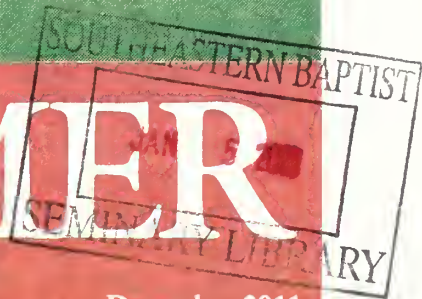


134:12



# Merry Christmas!

## BAPTIST INFORMER



Volume 134, No. 12

Publication of the General Baptist State Convention of N.C., Inc.

December 2011

GBSC THEME

*"PREACHING...TEACHING...REACHING"*

Matthew 28:19-20

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Banquet will be held 7:00 p.m., Friday, January 6, 2012**

Sheraton Imperial Hotel & Convention Center  
4700 Emperor Blvd.,  
Durham, NC 27703  
(Exit 282, Page Road)

Tickets are \$45.00 per person through December 25, 2011; \$60 per person after that date and at the door. (You may call and reserve tickets with a credit card or send check/money order in the mail and tickets will be held for you at the door).

For more information, contact Baptist Headquarters  
603 S. Wilmington St.,  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
(919) 821-7466.

See additional story on Page 3

## Holiday Greetings from President Parker

Christmas is a holiday generally observed on December 25th to commemorate the birth of Jesus, the central figure of Christianity. The exact birthday of Jesus is not known, and historians place His year of birth sometime between 7 BC and 2 BC. Narratives of His birth are included in two of the Canonical Gospels in the New Testament of the Bible.



Dr. Howard W. Parker  
GBSC President

The date of Christmas may have initially been chosen to correspond with either the day exactly nine months after Christians believe Jesus to have been conceived, the date of the Roman winter solstice, or one of various ancient winter festivals.

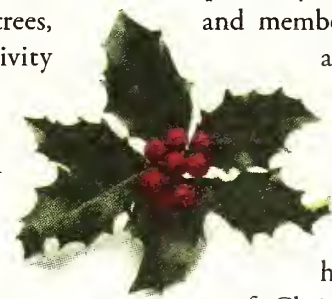
Although nominally a Christian

holiday, Christmas is celebrated by an increasing number of non-Christians worldwide, and many of its popular celebratory customs have pre-Christian or secular themes and origins. Popular modern customs of the holiday include gift-giving, music, an exchange of Christmas cards, church celebrations, a special meal, and the display of various decorations, including Christmas trees, lights, garlands, mistletoe, nativity scenes, and holly. In addition, several figures, known as Saint Nicholas, Father Christmas, and Santa Claus, among other names, are associated with bringing gifts to children during the Christmas season.

Because gift-giving and many other aspects of the Christmas festival involve heightened economic activity among both Christians and non-Christians, the holiday has become a significant event and a key sales period for retailers and businesses. The economic impact of Christmas is a factor

that has grown steadily over the past few centuries in many regions of the world.

Whatever your personal or family holiday traditions are and wherever you may be during this Christmas Season, my wife, LaVerna, my daughter Andrea, my son Kelly and I pray and hope that you the individuals



and member churches and associations of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina have a joyous and safe Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

To all of our Auxiliary Presidents and their officers and staff, to the General Board and Executive Committee, to our Executive Secretary/Treasurer(s) and to our entire office staff, may each of you have a blessed holiday in His name!

### Gift Establishes Scholarship in Honor of Vernon Malone

*From Press Reports*

[RALEIGH, NC] – Members of the family of Vernon Malone recently presented Shaw University with a check in the amount of \$89,680.45 which

represents the contributions of family and friends of the late North Carolina State Senator as well as funds that remained in his campaign fund when he died in April 2009.

The funds will be used to establish the Vernon and Susan Malone Endowed Scholarship, which will offer financial support to deserving students within Shaw's

Department of Education. Malone was an alumnus of Shaw as well as a member of its Board of Trustees.

"Senator Malone was a long-time supporter of Shaw and this act of generosity by his family continues that tradition," said Shaw President Dr. Dorothy Cowser Yancy. "We are proud of our association with the Malone

(Continued on Page 2)

**P2** Our Quest: Moving Beyond "No Room" Policies by Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II

**P3** Annual MLK Banquet to Feature Florida Pastor

**P8** MINISTRY BRIEFS

**P10** Public transit investments will benefit all, report says

# Our Quest: Moving Beyond "No Room" Policies

Peace to you all, and love with faith, from God our Creator and the Lord Jesus the Christ. Along with our illustrious President Dr. Howard Parker, our esteemed Executive Secretary-Treasurer Dr. Haywood T. Gray, the Vice Presidential Team, other officers of the parent body and auxiliaries, I wish you all a merry, blessed, joyous Christmas and a fruitful, fulfilling, uplifting New Year.



Dr. Nilous M. Avery, II  
Vice President-at-Large  
GBSC-NC

2,000 years ago provided a look at a mind-set that often plagues our world --- a mind-set of "no room." The savior of the world was born in an area usually set aside for the animals. There was "no room" for his family in that crowded town filled with people who had complied with Caesar Augustus' decree that all inhabitants of Rome's empire be registered.

This "no room" policy continued some time later when King Herod received word the Messiah had been born in Bethlehem. Herod sent his soldiers to kill all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under. Herod had a "no room" policy --- he would not tolerate any sharing of his throne.

Jesus often found Himself at odds with the political and religious leaders because of His passion for God and compassion for people. He placed human needs above tradition. He crossed lines and removed barriers that alienated people because of their race, sex, status, and religion. He advocated the inclusion of all persons.

As a result, Jesus was targeted for crucifixion because the political and religious leaders had a "no room" policy -- they would not tolerate any one defying their custom whose chief aim was to put and keep people "in their place."

Our world has a history of having a "no room" mind-set. Racism and sexism are twin cousins of evil, which seek to oppress others simply because of their skin color or gender. Whole segments of our population are often abandoned and isolated based upon their race, gender, economic status, creed, and/or religious and political beliefs. When Jesus comes again, will the "no room" policy still be in effect? Will this policy that faced Jesus when He was born as a child face Him as He returns as King?

Many have not made room for others because they have not made room for Jesus the Christ in their life. This season challenges us to lift the veil and tear down the walls that keep a "no room" mind-set in place.

- We must make room for the least, the lost, the lonely, the left out, the kept out, the locked out, and the knocked out.
- We must make room for the frail, the fragile, and the forgotten.

- We must make room for the distressed, the depressed, and the oppressed.
- We must make room for the hapless, the helpless, the hopeless, and the homeless.

If we do not strive to make room for those who are God's beautiful creatures, should we be surprised if God meets us at the gates of the Eternal City and declares: "There is no room for you?!"

Beloved, let us make room throughout the year to support the goals and objectives of our General Baptist State Convention. THANK YOU TO ALL WHO SUPPORTED THE 144th ANNUAL SESSION IN OCTOBER WITH YOUR PRESENCE, PRAYERS, and GENEROUS GIFTS FOR STATE MISSIONS, OTHER OBJECTIVES, and KINGDOM BUILDING! This is just the beginning of our efforts to make room for the work of ministry and missions through your generous and continual support.

*"May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (2 Thessalonians 3:18, NLT).*

This is the season when the world celebrates Christmas and the New Year in swift succession. Special attention is given to performing acts of compassion and embracing the angelic praise of "peace on earth among those whom God favors" (Luke 2:14, NRSV). Wouldn't it be nice if the hearts and minds of humankind were mobilized and energized to possess this mindset throughout the year?!

The world now stands in between the time when the Lord came into the world and the time when He will come again. The Lord's appearing here on that night in Bethlehem over

(Continued from Page 1)

family and it is appropriate that we will now have a scholarship within the Department of Education that bears his and his wife's name."

As a state senator, Malone was co-chairman of the education committee and appropriations committee for higher education. He spent most of his life as an educator and school administrator before being elected State Senator in 2003.

As school board chairman, he presided over the merger of Raleigh



city school and Wake County public schools in 1976. He also served as

vice-chair of Shaw University's Board of Trustees before his death. He also served as a trustee for North Carolina State University, the North Carolina Museum of Art and the Wake Education Partnership. He was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity.



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Rev. Haywood T. Gray, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

E.O. Johnson, Interim Managing Editor

Rev. Anthonette Wright, Advertising Editor

# Annual MLK Banquet to Feature Florida Pastor

By E.O. Johnson/The Baptist Informer

The Annual MLK Banquet on Friday, Jan. 6, 2012 in Durham will feature the Reverend Dr. Mack King Carter, Pastor Emeritus of New Mount Olive Baptist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Dr. Carter, a native of Ocala, Florida, is a noted pastor, teacher and theologian who is often con-



Dr. Mack King Carter

sidered one of the country's foremost "preacher's preacher." Known for his biblical scholarship and exegetical expertise and skill in homiletics and hermeneutics, Dr. Carter's classes at the National Baptist Convention's Congress of Christian Education repeatedly attract many preachers and laypersons

each year. He retired as senior pastor of the New Mount Olive Baptist Church in 2009.

He holds a Master of Divinity and a Doctorate of Ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also has honorary doctorates from Bethune Cookman College and Florida Memorial College.

He is the author of four books, including "A Catechism for Baptists," "To

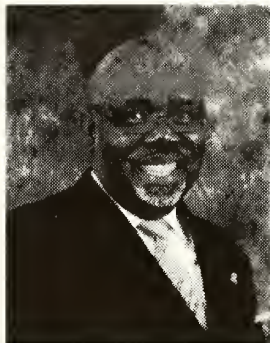
Calvary and Beyond" and "Interpreting the Will of God."

The banquet will be held at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel & Convention Center, 4700 Emperor Blvd., Durham, N.C. 27703 (Exit 282, Page Road). Tickets are \$45 per person until December 25, 2011; \$60 after that date and at the door.

For details, call the Baptist Headquarters at (919) 821-7466.

## May God's Best Be Your Best: Luke's Christmas Story Luke 2:8-20

The first intimation of this unique birth was not given to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, but to contemplative shepherds on Judean hillsides, humble men who were faithful at their regular work. An angel of the Lord came to the shepherds, and a bright, glorious light



Dr. Ricky L. Banks, GBSC Second Vice President

very day, in nearby Bethlehem, a Baby had been born. This Baby was a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. First, He is a Savior, which is expressed in His name, Jesus. Then He is Christ,

shone all around them. As they recoiled in terror, the angel comforted them and broke the news.

It was good tidings of great joy for all the people. That

the Anointed of God, the Messiah of Israel. Finally, He is the Lord, God manifest in the flesh.

How would the shepherds recognize Him? The angels gave them a twofold sign. First the Baby would be wrapped in swaddling cloths. The second part of the sign was that He would be lying in a manger. It makes our minds dizzy to think of the Creator and Sustainer of the universe entering human history not as a conquering military hero, but as a little Babe. Yet this is the truth of the Incarnation.

Suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host appeared, praising God. As soon as the angels departed, the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem and

found Mary and Joseph, and Jesus lying in a manger. They gave a complete report of the angel's visit, causing considerable surprise among those who had gathered in the stable. But Mary had a deeper understanding of what was going on; she treasured all these things, and knowingly pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned to their flocks, overjoyed at all they had heard and seen, and overflowing in their worship of God. "Thou my everlasting portion, more than friend or life to me, all along my pilgrim journey, Savior, let me walk with Thee. Close to Thee Close to Thee."

May God's best be your best.

## LAYMEN OUT-LOOK-(Part 6) Being Spiritual in the Midst of Chaos, Challenges

To conclude the summary of Biblical principles for Spiritual men, it is only fitting that the last two principles would be the Challenge of and the Charge to Spiritual Men.

Just to reiterate, the Laymen's Objective is to Deploy Men with Christ, which calls for radical Discipleship. Discipleship means adherence to Christ and, because Christ is the object of that devotion, it must take the form of discipleship.

Martyred German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in "The Cost of Discipleship" that "An

abstract Christology, a doctrinal system...render discipleship superfluous (un-necessary). In fact, they positively exclude any idea of discipleship whatever, and are essentially inimical (hostile) to the whole conception of following Christ." "With an abstract idea it is possible to enter into a relation of formal knowledge, to become enthusiastic about it, and perhaps even to put it into practice; but it can never be followed in personal obedience." Herein lies the challenge to spiritual men.

In 2 Timothy 3: Paul informs Timothy of difficult times for Christian service. Paul gives a descriptive list of behavior in the last days which describes our society -unfortunately, the behavior of many Christians.

As spiritual men, we are challenged to reject society's pressures. We should not settle for comfort

without commitment. The form of Godliness includes going to church, knowing doctrine and following a community's Christian traditions. Such practices can make person look good, but if the inner attitudes of belief, love, and worship are lacking, the outer appearance is meaningless.

Next, the challenge of Spiritual Men is to continue and contend to be spiritual men in the midst of corruption and chaos. After challenging Timothy, Paul transitions' to the Charge: "In the Presence of God and of Christ Jesus...I give you this charge"(2 Tim. 4:1). It is still vitally important for us, as spiritual men, to spread the gospel. We need to be prepared for, courageous in, and sensitive to God-given opportunities to tell the good news

This month, we are celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. More than likely we will ask-

ing and being asked, are you ready for Christmas? I will just take this time to share my personal outlook on this thought which was developed over time and through experience. When Jesus became incarnate in my life and I become a born-again Christian, everyday is Christmas to me!

On behalf of the Laymen of North Carolina, I want to wish one and all a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.



Bro. Richmond Turner GBSC Laymen

## Our Vision for 2012: "Upward, Outward, Onward"

In keeping with our creed to move forth looking upward, serving outward, and pressing onward so that the glory of the Lord is revealed before men, we, the Ushers Auxiliary, commit to continue to strive to make this Convention the best in the land.

This past year we sought to educate ourselves as to why and how we serve, and we learned that we can do better. So as we enter into a new year, the Ushers' resolve is to do better. How can we do better? We can do better through continuing education and training, developing youth ushers, and enthusiastically reclaiming our ushers back into supporting the Convention and various associations.

In 2012, we will continue to present vibrant workshops on the local and state levels. We desire workshops that will challenge our



**Mr. Charles Dunn**  
GBSC Ushers Auxiliary

ushers. If the ushers are willing to give us several hours of their time, then we must be willing to give them several hours of organized, prepared, enthusiastic, stimulating, and ambitious training.

If we are to be a successful organization then we must prepare the next generation. We need to get our youth involved and active. We had our youth in action at our one day session this past February, and we seek to do this again at our one day session in Feb. 2012, only this time we want to do it bigger and better. Our goal is to have eight to ten youth speaking and leading on ushering. We will continue to engage more youth participation in the convention.

We want to encourage all churches, associations, and unions to support the convention by ful-

filling their annual assessment. Think how much more the convention could do towards ministry if we could meet this challenge. We are asking all ushers to make sure this is a part of their church budget if it is not already. Also, we want our Ushers' leaders to be proactive in making sure the assessments are paid. Don't rely on assuming someone else is going to take care of it.

Lastly, we want to increase our representation at all sessions. I will ask our leaders to find and reclaim those ushers who just went away. Let them know that they are missed and their services are required. Invite them to come and be excited about what we are doing on the state and association level. If we are excited, they will be excited. We look forward to serving and making a difference in our churches and communities across the state: Upward, Outward, Onward!

In this season of ADVENT, preparation for the coming of our Christ, remember to keep Christ in Christmas.

The season of Advent begins four Sundays prior to Christmas Day with particular themes to focus on:

**November 27 Advent – Hope**

**December 4 Advent – Love**

**December 11 Advent – Joy**

**December 18 Advent – Peace**

**December 25**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

**HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!**

WOMAN'S BAPTIST HOME  
AND FOREIGN  
MISSIONARY CONVENTION OF  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Auxiliary to General Baptist State  
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Dr. Audrey P. Battle, President  
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## How Should We Approach Christmas: An All-Encompassing Holiday?

Reprinted from the December 23, 2003 eNews issue

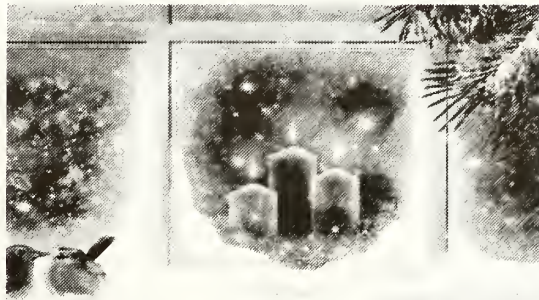
The celebration of Christmas has caused some controversy in recent years, for a variety of reasons. Many have been concerned that Christ is too often left out of Christmas; replaced by trimmings and presents and fudge. Others have battled over whether we should allow manger scenes on public property or allow the school choir to sing Christmas carols that actually contain a message about Jesus Christ. On the other hand, a growing number of Christians have been arguing that we should not celebrate Christmas at all because there is no command to do so in the Bible and because the celebration is based in pagan roots.

What stand should we take? How should we approach this all-encompassing holiday in the light of history and in the light of the Bible?

Because of pagan beliefs and historical pagan celebrations, many Christians believe we should avoid Christmas as ultimately a pagan holiday. However, does the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ itself have anything to do with pagans? It was, after all, foretold

centuries prior in the Hebrew Scriptures. In the fullness of time, God sent His Son to redeem mankind. He sent Jesus as a little baby to become God With Us.

About 1950 years ago, the well-educated and faithful physician Luke wrote to one Theophilus, detailing the life of Jesus Christ. Luke explained



that he had done research on the subject so that Theophilus could know with certainty that the things he had been told about Jesus were true (Luke 1:4). Luke must have spoken with Mary herself, for he tells of things that only she would know. 'But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart,' (Luke 2:19). He tells Theophilus of the birth of Jesus; how he was born in Bethlehem during a time when the entire Roman world was being taxed. Shepherds out in the field were surprised by a host of angels that filled the sky, singing, 'Glory to God in the highest!' and as they were told, went down to find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and

lying in a manger. Then, those shepherds told everybody they could find about the incredible things they had seen.

The child grew up and went on to have a short, three-year ministry that ended in his death on a Roman Cross. Yet, the man that was born in Bethlehem rose again from the dead,

as witnessed by over 500 men (1 Cor 15:6).

And he is still changing the hearts and lives of people living today.

The early Christians are not known to have celebrated Christ's birth, and the actual date of his nativity has been lost in history. The first recorded mention of

the December 25 date is in the Calendar of Philocalus (354 A.D.), which assumed Jesus' birth date to be Friday, December 25, 1 A.D. Pope Julius I officially proclaimed December 25 to be the anniversary of Christ's birth in 440 A.D. Giving December 25th Christian significance has been understood to have been an effort to help the pagan world embrace Christianity and trade in their worship of pagan gods for the One True God. Originally called the Feast of the Nativity, the custom spread to Egypt by 432 and to England by the end of the 6th century. By the end of the 8th century, the celebration of Christmas had spread all

the way to the Scandinavian countries. Christmas is celebrated on January 6 in the Orthodox Church, on what is also called Epiphany or Three Kings Day, the day that celebrates the arrival of the wise men who gave the Christ child their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The Season is still a mixture of traditions pulled from a multitude of sources. While many of them have little to do with Jesus, most are morally neutral activities. However, even while Santa Claus ho ho ho's down Main street on a fire truck, and Hershey makes a killing on aluminum-wrapped chocolate bells, the reality of Christ's birth does break through. Nativity scenes in downtown squares and in front of churches bring to mind the great gift of God - the King of kings lying in a manger, attended by shepherds. Children who see them have the chance to ask, 'What is that?' Christmas carols that cry 'The Lord is come' and 'Come let us adore him' are sung from door to door, reminding us all of what God has done. It is a time of year when people can speak more freely of Jesus the Savior, and when even the faithless are willing to go to a Christmas Eve church service. It is truly a precious slot of time God has given us during which to spread the Good News of His Son. Glory to God in the highest!

- Submitted by Frank Byrd, Jr./GBSC Congress of Christian Education

Dear Lott Carey Partner,

I recently visited Ethiopia to support our partners, African AIDS Initiative International (AII), which has had offices in Addis Ababa since



Rev. David Emmanuel Goatley, Ph.D.  
Lott Carey

2001. During the last decade, AII has been battling the AIDS pandemic through prevention education, care and support, and a l t e r n a t i v e

income generation training for commercial sex workers. Some of the impact that AII and Lott Carey have made dur-

ing the last four (4) years include:

- Equipping 1,379 peer leaders/educators through a full five (5) day intensive training program
- Providing volunteer counseling and testing service for 15,750 people
- Reaching 30,987 university students with individual level HIV prevention intervention
- Training 658 commercial sex workers concerning HIV prevention and treatment methods including basic life skill training
- Placing in jobs or gave start-up capital to 133 sex workers who are living with HIV/AIDS in alternative income generation program

The AIDS pandemic is still a crisis in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, and the Lott Carey network collaborates with many creative communities who

are, in the theme of AII, "fighting for life."

The AIDS pandemic is also at critical levels in African American communities in the United States. The infection rate in Washington, DC is at 3% of the population, more than in West Africa. One of the most relevant ministries for the church in the 21st century is HIV/AIDS prevention education. Week after week, we see people in our worshipping communities who need clear and compelling strategies to drive down the infection rate. Week after week we see people who, with clear and compelling strategies to drive down the infection rate, can effectively help those who never come onto church campuses to know and practices prevention strategies.

One resource that churches can

use in their efforts to persuade people to drive down the infection rate is through publishing and distributing our prevention strategies. You can download a printable copy from [www.lottcarey.org](http://www.lottcarey.org) under "2. Providing HIV/AIDS prevention education, care, and support." You can also order bookmarks that can easily be distributed to encourage people to know "What the church can say, and what you can do" from the Lott Carey office for \$75 per 100 bookmarks. Let's drive down the infection rate!

Rev. David Emmanuel Goatley, Ph.D.  
Lott Carey  
220 Eye Street, NE, Suite 220

## Focus on Health by Cornell Wright

### Prostate Cancer Seminar Well Attended at Annual Convention

Dr. Lisa Campbell



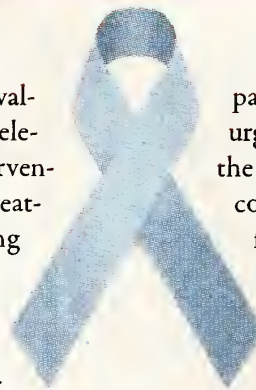
The Center for Health and Healing recently sponsored a health seminar at this year's Annual Session, held at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC. It focused on prostate cancer and featured a presentation by Dr. Lisa Campbell, a Health Psychologist from East Carolina University. More than 150 people came to listen, ask questions, and give testimonials on their personal experiences with this disease. African American men have the highest prostate cancer incidence and mortality rates in the U.S. and the world.

Here in the state of North Carolina, the statistics are particularly sobering. According to the North Carolina Office of Minority Health and the State Center for Health Statistics, African American men are almost 3 times as likely to die from prostate cancer as compared to white males in our state.

Prostate cancer and its treatment, pose not just physical challenges, but emotional and social challenges as well. The cumulative effect of these challenges can strain the coping resources of both survivors and their partners. To better address the supportive care needs of African American prostate cancer survivors and their partners, Dr. Campbell is leading a team of researchers in conducting the Prostate Cancer Recovery Enhancement Study (PROCARE), funded by the National Cancer Institute.

The PROCARE study evaluates the effectiveness of telephone-based supportive interventions for improving post-treatment quality of life among African American prostate cancer survivors and their intimate partners. Over the course of 6 telephone sessions, couples receive educational information to support coping and maintain intimacy. This telephone-based approach offers couples the convenience and privacy of participating from their own homes. Because the PROCARE study is telephone-based, it is also accessible to couples living throughout North Carolina.

At the conclusion of the seminar, Dr. Campbell stressed that enrollment in PROCARE remains open, but will close in March. Each audience member received an information



packet and Dr. Campbell urged all attendees to share the information with other couples who could benefit from the supportive education available through the PROCARE study.

For more information about the PROCARE study please visit the study website: [www.ecu.edu/procare](http://www.ecu.edu/procare). Study staff can also be reached by phone at 1-800-442-8202 or email at [PROCARE@ecu.edu](mailto:PROCARE@ecu.edu).

For more information about the Center for Health and Healing, please visit our website: [www.c4hh.org](http://www.c4hh.org) or call us toll free at 1-866-972-6374.

*Article submitted by Cornell Wright, Programs Manager, Center for Health and Healing, in conjunction with Dr. Lisa Campbell.*

## EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT Woman's Baptist Home & Foreign Missionary Convention of NC

### Position Description

High level of competence, proven skills in written and verbal communications, ability to multitask and work under pressure. Have good organizational skills, can manage time well, can lead by example, is self motivated and willing to accept responsibility. Have capacity to be a team player and leader, works well with others, have respect for self and others. Willing to give of self for the cause of the Woman's Convention. Must be mission-minded with a record reflecting such. Confidentiality and trustworthiness are essential. Must be flexible and able to work weekends.

**EDUCATION:** Minimum Bachelor's Degree, experienced in office management, bookkeeping, use of technology, including accounting software, excel, publishing, etc. Have some supervisory experience. Have a minimum of 4 years experience as an executive assistant, administrative assistant, bookkeeper and/or office manager.

**DUTIES:** Manage and coordinate logistics associated with the calendar of events throughout the year in a timely manner. Coordinate planning meetings and participate as necessary, schedule appointments, make travel arrangements, communicate and collaborate with officials, pastors, and other leaders in a professional manner, assist with proofreading, report writing and letter writing as needed. Must be available for office management in the absence of the Executive Secretary-Treasurer (EST).

Responsible for developing reporting systems that will provide accurate and up-to-date access to data. Collaborate with EST on updated financial reports on a regular basis such that reports are readily available as needed. Responsible for accurately receipting all income and preparing daily report of income. Must be able to do bank reconciliations, balance sheets, and create various budget reporting formats. Assist with planning and preparation for Executive Committee, Executive Board and various committee meetings and retreats. Other duties deemed necessary by the Executive Secretary-Treasurer (EST). Reports directly to the EST.

Those interested should submit resumes to the Rev. Dr. Linda W. Bryan,  
Executive Secretary-Treasurer, WBHFMC-NC, P.O. Box 1818, Raleigh, NC 27602.

**DEADLINE: December 31, 2011.**

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## TRADITIONAL CHURCHES: Proactive Planning for the Future

By Bill Wilson

(ABP) -- What if you knew that your congregation was on a collision course with its demise? What would you do? Who would you tell? How would it change the way you lead? Would it affect your sense of urgency? Would it help you better distinguish between minor and major issues?

The painful truth of the 21st century traditional congregation is that it faces a very grim future without significant intervention. More than the usual hyperbole or alarmist rhetoric, the crisis is real. David Olson of the American Church Project ([www.theamericanchurch.org](http://www.theamericanchurch.org)) has documented the painful truth carefully. Olson, using realistic counts of attendees, reveals that traditional, established congregations that are more than 40 years old are in steady and persistent decline. Some are in dramatic decline. This tends to hold true regardless of theology, worship style, denomination or locale.

Ominously, the percentage of the American public actively attending local congregations of any type is dropping precipitously. Despite self-reporting that suggests more than 40 percent of U.S. citizens are active attenders, the truth appears to be rad-

ically different. Olson's studies reveal that less than 20 percent of Americans attend a Christian church on a given weekend.

Other researchers confirm the facts in a variety of studies. The only growing segments for most denominations are new church starts, megachurches or ethnic congregations. That leaves the vast majority of American Protestant congregations which have been in existence more than 40 years facing a very uncertain future.

So how do congregational leaders lead when facing such fierce headwinds?

In watching congregations attempt to deal with these realities in healthy ways, I have come to appreciate these practices:

Initiate some honest assessment. The starting point for creating a hopeful future is a realistic assessment of where you are. Many clergy and lay leaders live in denial of the truth about their congregational life. Someone will need to have the courage to point out the obvious, raise awareness and wrestle with complex issues.

Resist the blame game. One of the reasons clergy are hesitant to point out the truth of declining metrics is that they know there is a high likelihood that the congregation will point an accusing finger at them. My observation is that, when confronted with the painful truth about their metrics, most congregations react with predictable knee-jerk reactions and seek a quick fix to a deeply complex set of issues. If leaders can agree to hold off on blaming and focus on understanding and prayerful analysis, then honest and helpful conversation

is a possibility.

Develop new metrics that fit today. Our measurements tend to fall into the "nickels and noses" variety. We think the only measure of spiritual health or success for a congregation is bodies in the seats on Sunday mornings and dollars in the plate. We are woefully ill-prepared for the realities of the 21st century. Such metrics are a holdover from the churched era when congregational involvement was a given and our faith traditions were the exclusive option for the religiously inclined. Dramatically new ways of measuring success and engagement are needed and available for thoughtful congregations.

Engage in Spirit-led proactive planning. Many congregations and leadership groups have neglected proactive planning and fallen victim to reactionary planning. We fail to look beyond the next quarter or 12 months, and find ourselves in a reactive stance, juggling whatever the culture or the economy or demographics or anxious congregants throw at us. Far healthier are the leaders who insist that their congregation invest resources and time to look ahead anticipating rather than reacting.

Reclaim your heritage. Living in the mid- to late 20th century has spoiled us. The church of Jesus Christ has always had its best days when facing the steepest odds or under the most intense persecution. We have grown lazy and sloppy in our outreach, discipleship and stewardship.

Our heritage as God's people on mission reminds us: "When we are weak, then we are strong." Many of us will have the chance to live out that historic lineage in the near future.

Lead. When we are in a crisis, we need leaders. Don't go at it alone but don't think your congregation can navigate these turbulent waters without clear leadership from you.

The Titanic? Really?

Perhaps I am being a bit melodramatic. But honestly, I sense that this is the truth we all need to face and wrestle with. Business as usual for established churches is going to lead us to a world of declining resources, dwindling congregants, and the loss of vision and passion. Many of you are already there. Now is the time to speak the truth, reclaim our hope and launch a realistic and thoughtful plan for our future as God's people.

The iceberg looms. Really. Take action now.

Bill Wilson is president of the Center for

Congregational Health in Winston-Salem,

N.C.

*EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER: As part of our mission to provide credible and compelling information about matters of faith, the Baptist Informer actively seeks a diversity of viewpoints in its columns, commentaries and other opinion-based content. Opinions expressed in these articles are not intended to represent GBSC-NC editorial policy and do not necessarily reflect the views of its staff, boards or supporters.*



## MINISTRY BRIEFS

### New Position at Federal Bureau of Prisons Chaplaincy

The Reverend Dr. Michael R. Smith, Sr. has been called to lead the Federal Bureau of Prisons Chaplaincy Services as the Chief of Chaplains in Washington, D.C.



Previous positions include staff Chaplain at Raleigh's Central Prison and the Administrative Program Manager - Chaplaincy Services, Washington, DC. He has also served in the General Baptist State Convention (GBSC) of N.C. as Chairman of both the Discipleship and Prison Ministry Committees. He presently serves as a Commissioner for the Prison Ministry and Criminal

Justice Commission of the National Baptist Convention, USA.

**Host an International Student** Pacific Intercultural Exchange (P.I.E.) is looking for families to host international students from one semester to one year.

Host families are eligible to claim a monthly charitable contribution deduction on their itemized tax returns for each month they host a sponsored student.

The students, aged 15-18, are from countries such as Germany, the Former Soviet Union, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Hungary, Korea, Mexico and China. They are English-speaking, have their own money, carry accident and health insurance and want to share their cultural experiences with their new American families.

P.I.E. is designated by the U.S. Department of State. For more information, please call 1-866-546-1402.

**Martin Street Baptist Church  
Administrative Assistant Position  
Job Description**

**Overview**

The Administrative Assistant is directly responsible to the Pastor of the Church. It is his/her responsibility to coordinate the activities in the Church Office and to provide leadership and assistance to the Pastor in carrying out his administrative responsibilities as our spiritual leader. He/she will provide supervision over any part-time administrative support staff hired to assist in the Church Office. The Personnel Committee will consult (as needed).

**Position Status**

**Full-Time**

**Job Duties & Responsibilities**

- Work closely with the Pastor to coordinate his schedule of appointments, travel, conferences, etc.
- Will keep the Pastor informed of members needing assistance, illness, deaths, births, marriages, and other events of church members and families of members.
- Prepare bulletin for Sunday Worship Service.
- Type letters, funeral programs, office forms, and special programs.
- Handle the mailing of any sympathy or get-well cards to church members.
- Maintain church membership database.
- Coordinate the distribution of Offering envelopes to all church members.
- Maintain an official record of the financial contributions of church members and prepare and mail a report (annually) to each church member (in coordination with the Finance Committee).
- Receive and coordinate information regarding the annual recognition of graduates and retirees.
- Coordinate the use of church facilities (by outside groups as well as church members and auxiliaries) in cooperation with the appropriate oversight committee (of the Trustee Board) and the Pastor.
- Develop an appropriate system for filing and maintaining church records.
- Perform other tasks and responsibilities as assigned by the Pastor.

**Job Skills & Requirements**

- Cordial and professional conduct and excellent interpersonal skills.
  - A commitment to confidentiality of personal information of the congregation and staff.
  - Excellent organizational and time management skills.
  - Self-motivated with the ability to work independently.
  - Proven leadership abilities.
  - Proven written and verbal skills.
  - Knowledge of Microsoft software products (i.e., Word, Excel, Outlook, and Publisher).
  - Timely attendance (with the ability to vary one's schedule when needed).
  - Knowledge of accounting software.
  - Demonstrated knowledge of bookkeeping, recordkeeping, and payroll.
- Evaluation & Compensation**
- The Administrative Assistant works directly under the Pastor and receives an annual performance evaluation.
  - Compensation is reviewed annually.
- Minimum Qualifications**
- An Associate's Degree in a related field.
  - A minimum of four years experience as an Administrative Assistant (or a related field).

**Please send resumes to :**  
**Administrative Assistant Search Committee**  
**c/o Preston T. McClain, III**  
**Martin Street Baptist Church**  
**1001 E. Martin St.**  
**Raleigh, NC 27601**

**Resumes may also be sent (via email) to:**  
**[martinstbaptist@nc.rr.com](mailto:martinstbaptist@nc.rr.com)**

**DEADLINE: December 30, 2011**

**Piney Grove East Missionary Baptist Church**

1708 Ansonville Road  
 Marshville, NC 28103

Mailing Address  
 Piney Grove East Missionary Baptist Church  
 P.O. Box 3388  
 Wingate, NC 27174  
 Telephone: 704-233-4117

Piney Grove East Missionary Baptist Church is seeking resumes for the position of Pastor. The cut-off date for resumes acceptance is **February 29, 2012**.

Applicant must have the following qualification:

- Born again
- Licensed and ordained in the Missionary Baptist Church
- A Bachelors, Masters or Doctorate in Religion, Theology or Divinity
- Pastoral Experience preferred
- Be willing and qualified to teach Bible Class and BTU Training Classes
- Good oral communication skills
- Good written communication skills
- Strong church administrative ability
- Expected to preach, counsel,, perform marriage ceremonies, visit the sick, conduct funerals
- Represent the church in meetings of the association, local, state and national convention
- Family oriented – Husband of one wife

**New Hope Missionary Baptist Church**

New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of northeast Chatham County, Apex, North Carolina (near Research Triangle Park) is seeking a Pastor to lead the congregation in a growing community.

All interested candidates should possess the following:

- A born-again believer in Jesus Christ and trained in the Baptist faith
- Licensed and ordained with a clean record in and outside of the church
- Must have five years pastoral/ministry experience
- Must have graduated from an accredited bible college/seminary
- Must have proven excellent leadership abilities
- Must be able to teach as well as preach God's word
- Must have good administrative skills and be technologically savvy

All interested candidates should mail their resume to:

Pastoral Search Committee  
 New Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
 P O Box 947, Apex, NC 27502

or

Submit their resume via email to [NHMBCPastoralSearch@gmail.com](mailto:NHMBCPastoralSearch@gmail.com)

All resumes must be postmarked or submitted via email by January 31, 2012

All candidates must submit to a criminal background and credit check.

**Resumes submitted prior to December 1, 2011 must be resubmitted**

## Public transit investments will benefit all, report says

From Press Reports

RALEIGH (Nov. 2, 2011) – Investments in public transit improve life for North Carolinians by creating jobs, enhancing mobility and connecting our communities. But transit plans must be integrated with equitable housing policies and measures that will benefit the entire community, regardless of income bracket, a new report says.

Investments in public transportation create enormous opportunities for community development, said a report released this morning by the

North Carolina Budget & Tax Center. However, research has also shown that building transit stations in neighborhoods can create higher housing costs, gentrification, and tends to attract high-income residents, creating a challenge for the many low-income residents who rely on public transit to commute to work.

As North Carolina's policymakers move forward with plans to upgrade and extend public-transit options – such as high-speed rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit – they must also consider the individuals that most rely on public transit. Last year, the report said, 60 percent of North Carolinians traveling to work via public transit had incomes under \$25,000.

“Investing in public transit is critical for North Carolina's future,” said report author Tazra Mitchell, a public policy fellow with the NC Budget & Tax Center. “To maximize the bene-

fits of public transportation, though, we have to be sure it benefits all segments of our communities.”

Housing and transportation account for 55.1 percent of expenditures for the average lower-income household in the U.S., the report said. While living near a bus or train stop could in fact free up many of these transportation expenses, the reverse can happen for housing costs.

Neighborhoods surrounding new transit stations are often dominated by renters and tend to experience increased housing costs and gentrification within the first few years of the transit service. Ultimately, the individuals living closest to the transportation hubs pre-transit service are at risk of being “priced out” of their neighborhood.

In order to ensure that transit investments benefit all citizens, the report said, transit plans need compo-

nents such as affordable housing measures. Local policymakers could establish a housing trust fund to publically finance existing and new affordable housing units near planned transit hubs, or establish an acquisition fund that would purchase property near stations, where affordable housing could be preserved or produced.

“Transit plans that are not integrated with housing policies can lead to inequitable effects on lower-income and transit-dependent residents, straining rather than enhancing vulnerable communities' connectivity to jobs and services,” Mitchell said. “Policymakers can require that transit plans include affordable-housing measures in order to achieve greater transportation equity and access for North Carolinians at all income levels.”

# THE WOMAN'S BAPTIST HOME & FOREIGN MISSIONARY CONVENTION OF N.C. ANNOUNCES

## The 59TH ANNUAL ONE DAY SESSION

On

# SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 2012

## SHERATON IMPERIAL HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER

4700 Emperor Blvd, Durham, NC 27703 (Exit 282, Page Road)

The 59th Annual One-Day Session will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, January 7, 2012 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center, 4700 Emperor Blvd. in Durham. A special invitation is extended to our youth and young adults. Come expecting to be blessed through music, teaching, preaching and fellowship.

For details, please call the WBHFMC at (919) 833-4823.

### HELPFUL CONTACTS

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919-821-7466

FEMA (federal aid):  
1-800-621-3362

NC Hotline (state aid):  
1-888-835-9966

NC Division of Emergency Management  
[www.ncem.org](http://www.ncem.org)

NC Cooperative Extension  
[www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/disaster)

State Dept. of Health/Human Services  
[www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/hurricane.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/hurricane.htm)

# Shaw University Divinity School



**Save the Date**

**The 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Shaw University Divinity School**

**Alexander/Pegues Minister's Conference**

**March 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012**

**Conference Preacher: Dr. Charles Booth**

**Conference Lecturer: Dr. John Kinney**

**And more...**



## Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Banquet

Will be held

**Friday, JANUARY 6, 2012**

**SHERATON IMPERIAL HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTER**

**4700 Emperor Blvd, Durham, NC 27703**

**(Exit 282, Page Road)**

**Stay Tuned for ticket information!**

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