

## FAMILY SEEKS TO REACH 'UNWANTED'

Butch Blume - The Baptist Courier



Grant and Amber Hinson sold everything and moved their family into a mobile home park as missionaries. (Photo courtesy The Baptist Courier)

**LANCASTER, SC (BP)** — Imagine quitting your job, putting your roomy home up for sale, paring down your possessions by way of a yard sale, saying goodbye to family and friends, and moving your family nearly two hours away to set up housekeeping in a singlewide in the middle of a crime-plagued trailer park. Grant and Amber Hinson can't imagine doing anything else.

In May 2013, after praying about the move they felt God was preparing them for, Grant and Amber and their two children -- a toddler and an infant -- left behind the security of steady jobs and a middle-class lifestyle in order to immerse themselves as missionaries in a neighborhood law enforcement officials had tagged as a "hot spot" for criminal and drug activity. Grant was a church youth pastor, and Amber a hospital nurse, when they walked away from their jobs in Rockwell, N.C., to move to Countryside mobile home park, a cluster of about 185 trailers housing more than 700 people in Lancaster, S.C.

Three local churches -- one white, one black and one Hispanic -- had committed themselves to establishing a Christian foothold, a mission outpost, in the park, and Grant and Amber accepted the challenge to live and minister among the "unwanted" residents of Countryside. Grant said he and Amber have known what it feels like to be unwanted, which includes "anything from being the last picked on the playground to not being grouped with the cool kids." "There are always those who feel they are the person nobody wants," said Grant, noting God had given his family an opportunity to reach out to those people.

The Hinsons and their children -- Asher, 6; Evan Grace, 4; and, now, 5-month-old Adah Ruth -- invest their time in getting to know their neighbors and establishing human connections with them. "Our purpose is to connect our neighbors to Christ and show them that we all are equal and have a purpose in life," Amber said. "We spend a lot of time in neighbors' homes and yards, and many have spent time at our house," she said. "People don't care about your Jesus until they know you care about them." Amber takes women to the grocery store and to doctor appointments, and she helps Spanish-speaking moms communicate with their kids' schoolteachers. Grant meets with men in the neighborhood almost daily, where he counsels and prays with them. He also plays basketball with them on Friday evenings. The Hinsons schedule events like fall festivals and yard sales in an effort to bring neighbors together.

Grant and Amber hold ministry activities in a rented trailer called The Connection, where, with the help of area church volunteers, they have "Homework Helpers" for school kids three days a week, English-as-a-second-language classes, and a men's prayer meeting. The Hinsons also connect the residents of Countryside with local church congregations. In the summer, area churches and visiting mission groups, mostly from out of state, work with Grant and Amber to hold backyard Bible clubs, sports camps and Vacation Bible Schools. Each week, a local church sends over a bus to pick up kids for an Awana club meeting. The Hinsons' work is supported by several churches, by Moriah Baptist Association and by a construction company. Grant and Amber also receive some funding from the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Daryl Price, SCBC church planting director, said the Hinsons "exemplify sold-out, living-for-Jesus missionary behavior." Price said the couple is "doing what we are training our churches to do: cross cultures and barriers and take the Gospel to everyone." Lee Clamp, evangelism director for the state convention, echoed Price's statement. "Grant and Amber are living out what we would hope all believers would do -- live life as a missionary where they live, work and play," he said. "They moved into a neighborhood that was under-reached and full of need and began to take responsibility for those around them." Bryant Fersner, director of missions for Moriah Baptist Association, said the Hinsons' work represents a "biblical model of discipleship, evangelism and incarnational missions." He said Grant and Amber are discipling a married couple and an individual -- residents of Countryside -- to also be "incarnational missionaries." The vision is to multiply the model in other communities and neighborhoods, Fersner said.



Volunteers gather in a circle to pray following a day of ministry at the Countryside Mobile Home Park with the Hinsons. (Photo courtesy The Baptist Courier)

Grant's message to the "unwanted," drawn from Acts 17:26-27, is that God "is never far from each of us." It doesn't matter if the

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people aren't white, or if they're not middle-class, or if they don't know who their parents are, he said, because they're "just as valuable to God as we are." "There's nothing they've done -- nothing they can do -- to make God run away screaming," Grant said. His message to his neighbors: "God has a perfect plan for you to seek and find Him." When asked how they knew the time was right to quit their jobs -- even before they knew what God's plan was for their future -- Grant and Amber said they, in fact, did not know. But both, in separate interviews, uttered the same phrase: "Commitment comes before clarity."

"We had to commit to God before we had any clarity," Amber said. "Now, looking back, we've seen His protection on our family. We know it's His will for us to be here. Blessings come with clarity, and faith deepens." A year after their move to Countryside, Amber wrote in her blog: "We have seen death and life. We have seen tears and joy. We have seen abuse and love. We have seen handcuffs and chains break. We have seen addictions and re-dedications. We have seen depression and forgiveness. We have seen our faith grow. We have seen people love. We have leaned into our Savior's embrace and felt Him guiding and teaching," Amber said. "He has never left us."

Today, almost three years after abandoning their safe, predictable lives to move to Countryside, Grant and Amber say it was the best decision they've ever made, the most transformative experience of their lives. To those who likewise feel led to follow God to an unknown place, Amber has a word of advice: "Take that leap of faith. It's so worth it." Ask yourself the question, what am I willing to do by faith?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Butch Blume is managing editor of The Baptist Courier, the news magazine of the churches of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, where this article first appeared.

## WHAT CHURCH PLANTERS WANT YOU TO KNOW

*Shane Pruitt - Southern Baptists of Texas Convention*

**GRAPEVINE, TX** – A simple definition of a church planter is one who plants (or starts) a new local church. That leads to the question, "What is a good definition for church?" The word "church" originally comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which is defined as "an assembly" or "called-out ones." The root meaning of "church" is not that of a building but of a people. Beyond just a Greek definition of the word, the New Testament model of the local church is a group of people who confess Jesus as Lord and Savior and live out the Great Commission.

So, to combine these ideas, a church planter would be one called by God to start a new movement of people who commonly trust in Jesus and are faithful disciples of Him. Who is this kind of person that in the process of church planting often leaves a steady salary and an established ministry for the complete unknown? Is he brave or is he naïve enough to try it? Even for church planters, these are sometimes hard questions to answer.



### CHURCH PLANTING

While not an exhaustive list, here are a few characteristics about church planters that are helpful to know as you pray for and support them in their work:

1. Planters (at least most of them) are not trying to steal people from your church but to reach a segment of people not hearing and/or responding to the Gospel in a particular location. They are focused primarily on those people, not on wooing members of other churches.
2. Church plants could benefit from you sending people from your church. Like green plants need air and water, every new ministry needs two basic things: resources and people. What a blessing it can be when established churches prayerfully support the work God is doing by intentionally challenging some of their members to go out as laborers into the harvest to live like missionaries.
3. Planters have put everything on the line -- finances, families, pride, fears, everything. One of the most amazing things you can do for a church planter is commit to walk with him through this process. Commit to six months, a year or a lifetime. For a planter to know that someone else has his best interest in mind instills courage to dream God-sized dreams.
4. Planters desperately need faith and wisdom. When starting a church, literally hundreds of decisions have to be made. Church planters need prayer and counsel to help them make wise decisions and maintain a strong faith in God. In the face of risk, great challenges and, at times, internal opposition, being encouraged to have faith in God to do the work He has called them to is incredibly important.



## WHAT CHURCH PLANTERS WANT YOU TO KNOW (continued)

4. Planters desperately need faith and wisdom. When starting a church, literally hundreds of decisions have to be made. Church planters need prayer and counsel to help them make wise decisions and maintain a strong faith in God. In the face of risk, great challenges and, at times, internal opposition, being encouraged to have faith in God to do the work He has called them to is incredibly important.

5. Planters fear failure but know it's a very real possibility. Many struggle with coming to grips with failure, as many church plants do not survive past their third year. A key spiritual battle is for the planter to fully and daily give the future and the work to God so that he is free to minister with joy and confidence rather than worry. Even the apostle Paul suffered with these kinds of fearful thoughts when he wrote, "And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches" (2 Corinthians 11:28).

6. Planters need a pastor, too. They desperately need your help, and they know that. While they don't necessarily want to be constantly critiqued and prodded, they often appreciate fresh eyes, outside perspective and wisdom that comes from experience. Sometimes they'll ask. Sometimes they won't. But if you'll listen well and ask insightful, caring questions, they will be glad to listen when you offer advice and thank you for it.

7. Planters have a wife and a family. The pioneering nature of church planting can be extremely hard on a church planter's spouse and children. Often, planters are bivocational, working a job on top of pastoring. Pray for them and challenge them not to sacrifice their families on the altar of ministry. At the beginning, planters are preachers, greeters, chair-stackers, toilet-cleaners and much more. As a result, their families can suffer. Help them to value their wives and pastor their children.

So, who is this man called to plant a church? Likely, he is nothing more than a follower of Jesus, called by God to "go" with nothing more than a vision that can only come from God. But when it comes down to it, he is just someone being obedient to the will of God, and really, that is all that matters.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shane Pruitt is director of missions for the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention (SBTC) [www.sbtexas.com](http://www.sbtexas.com). He was the Planter & Teaching Pastor of C3 Rowlett (Connection Community Church) [www.c3rowlett.com](http://www.c3rowlett.com) from 2010 till 2015. Before C3, Shane was a Youth Pastor for 7 years, and an Associate Pastor for 3 years. Youth Pastor at FBC Fate, TX and Orchard Hills Baptist Church in Garland, TX, then became Associate Pastor at Orchard Hills, before planting C3 Rowlett.

## WITH STAINS REMOVED, HE RETURNS TO THE STREETS

*Jim Burton*

**NORWICH, CT (BP)** – David Holland says his single mom raised him right. He went to church and knew about God. But when he got older, he "branched out into different areas." Soon, he was mired in a life of crime and addiction. Between the ages of 21 and 40, Holland estimates he spent eight-plus years incarcerated for short-term sentences on a range of charges, such as cocaine possession with intent to sell and domestic violence.

Incarceration, Holland now believes, was God working to rescue him from his addictions to alcohol and crack cocaine. His brother remembers him as looking like a dying HIV patient during that time. "A lot of my friends are dead," said Holland, of Norwich, Conn. "If they aren't dead, they probably wish they were because they are crippled, paralyzed or addicted to drugs."

Violence claimed the life of one of his closest friends, gunned down by rivals in broad daylight. The friend's death gripped Holland with fear, so he went home and destroyed all of his drugs and related paraphernalia, then started praying. "I just started praying to God, and it was scaring me more because I knew He was hearing me," Holland said. "I knew He was answering me." The answer started with a carpet-cleaning job. One of Holland's first assignments was to clean the carpet at a Southern Baptist church plant, Cornerstone City Church. While struggling to clean a pesky stain, he was approached by pastor Shaun Pillay. "You know that stain you keep trying to get, we have them in our heart too," the church planter said. "Sometimes when we try to get rid of them we can't. But Jesus can."

## WITH STAINS REMOVED, HE RETURNS TO THE STREETS (continued)

Pillay gave Holland a Bible and pointed him to Psalm 46:10, with its instruction to be still as God does His work in and through a person's life. Pillay, an Asian Indian who grew up in Durban, South Africa, had come to Norwich to start an inner-city church. The launch was upcoming on Easter Sunday, April 7, 2009, and he invited Holland. During the service's invitation, Holland responded. "It was like God took everything off of me," Holland said. "My socks, shoes, and shoestrings. It was like I was stripped naked. I was reborn that day in that church. We have those stains in our heart that only Jesus can clean." Pillay not only gained the church's first convert, he gained a person of peace who connected Cornerstone to the city.

Norwich, in southeastern Connecticut, has a rich history of manufacturing and shipping. The city played a significant role in the American Revolution with its production of ships and munitions. Today, it has about 40,000 residents and is called "The Rose of New England." The city's heritage had little effect on Holland. By the time he was in high school, his reputation as an athlete was beginning to gain him favors -- playing with older students who started giving him drugs. The last of five children, Holland kept his newfound habits from his mother. When she finally figured out what he was doing, she was deeply hurt. She was the first of many who would be hurt.

By 21, he met someone who offered him the opportunity to make money selling drugs. "It seemed good, but it never was good," Holland said. "It was nothing but total chaos. Not one bit of it was fun." Those years are painful to remember, but Holland now understands that his previous drug use was a boot camp for his current ministry as Cornerstone City Church's community outreach organizer. He's like a one-man fire department, on call 24 hours a day to respond to emergency calls from addicts, homeless and others. "We are the number one church called to do anything," Holland said of Cornerstone's reputation in the region.

His old haunts are now his mission field. Shortly after his conversion, Holland started street witnessing. The pastor knew that Holland needed mentoring and discipleship first. For the next few years, they met regularly for that purpose. And they intentionally met in different places around Norwich because wherever they went Holland knew people. "He has had significant growth in Christ," said Pillay, who is also a North American Mission Board church planting catalyst. "All the people that he used to sell drugs to he was intentional to go back and reach them."

Holland's transformation has been evident beyond Cornerstone. He and Pillay have visited with Connecticut Gov. Daniel Malloy on several occasions, and he has connected with the ministries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Norwich. And he received a Connecticut NAACP Humanitarian Award for 2015. Holland also serves the Baptist Convention of New England as a board member. As Terry Dorsett, BCNE's executive director, recounted, "When David was asked to be on the board of directors, his first response was that he did not know much about being on a board, but was willing to serve the Lord in any way he could."

"I remember telling him that that was exactly the kind of heart we were looking for in board members and he responded by saying, 'You can count on me.'"



Pastor Shawn Pillay with David Holland (Photo courtesy Baptist Press)



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Burton is a writer and photojournalist living in Atlanta.



## COMMITTED WITH BOTH FEET IN! A LOOK BACK AT THE WOMEN'S WINTER MISSIONS RETREAT

*Sue Hodnett - Baptist State Convention of Michigan*

**ROSCOMMON, MI** – More than 145 women and a few men literally slid into the Bambi Lake Baptist Retreat and Conference Center for the 2016 Women's Missions Retreat, setting the stage for a fantastic weekend together despite the icy conditions. The retreat would stress the importance of making sure the group's next steps with God would be with "Both Feet In" and hopefully not up in the air!

The mission studies were led by Sharon Hessling, a retired IMB Missionary. Hessling shared personal accounts from her mission field experiences. Hearts were captivated by her stories and photos as she challenged the ladies to "walk in all His ways". Using the acronym, GOIN, G- grip the gift of grace, O- own the order, I- inch toward intimacy, and N- next step, never alone, women were encouraged to take next steps in commitment to God.

Legacy and Friends led the women in the worship, directed by Cindy Parker. The theme song for the weekend was, 'Here Am I Lord'.

Saturday morning the women were offered a variety of breakout sessions to attend, each designed to challenge them to take their relationship with God to the next level. Most of the breakout sessions provided interaction and engagement in group activities. From the sounds emanating throughout the camp, it was obvious those in attendance were having a good time.

Saturday evening featured virtual mission trips to the countries of Niger, Yemen, and France, complete with Passport screening and security customs officers. The experience felt as if it was an international trip. Women had the opportunity to interact with missionaries from each of the locations: Sharon Hessling, Niger, Marge Lewis, Yemen and Dr. Tony Lynn and Jamie Lynn, Paris, France. Participants experienced the culture, tasted the cuisine, and learned ways to engage with the people groups from each of these areas. Many of the women shared that this was the highlight of the retreat for them. They valued the knowledge how to witness to these people groups because these people are their neighbors here in Michigan.

Dr. Tony Lynn, BSCM State Director of Missions, shared personal accounts of being on mission for God. His passion for the lost and sharing Christ was extremely evident as he taught the Bible studies. Lynn explained how in our lives the 4 "A's" (Action, Attitude, Affections, and Ambitions) needed to be in alignment with God before taking the invitation to go "Both Feet In". He concluded the Sunday morning worship with a passionate call, challenging women to live everyday walking more deeply with Christ. Many women made a public commitment to ministry and missions, surrendering to the Father's purpose, as they put "Both Feet In."

### Retreat Reactions...

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"What touched me the most from this weekend was to let go of the fear, safety, and comfort of this world and to jump in with both feet to share the gospel with whatever, however, and to whomever God chooses."

Lisa Jones

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"I would have to say that...The Both Feet In conference showed me that while I may be too chicken to become a missionary in some foreign country, there is plenty that I can do in my local community and that I can still be bold at home for Christ."

Sharon Paratchek

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"In order to be fully in God's will with your whole heart, with your whole life, and with your whole soul, I've learned I have to have both feet in God's will. I have never walked away from one weekend learning so much about the lost people of the world and having such a renewed spirit. The Women's Winter Retreat was amazing not only did I bond with my God, I got to bond with my mother, mother-in-law and many more inspirational women. I am totally blessed and hope to carry His love with me every day."

Megan Line

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"The retreat was very moving spiritually to me, I came home with a new attitude prayers are being answered and I can see it happening. Thank you so much."

Angelia Jenkins King



## RACIAL UNITY TO BE PART OF 2016 SBC

Art Toalston - Baptist Press



(Courtesy SBC)

**ST. LOUIS, MO (BP)** – "A National Conversation on Racial Unity in America" will be among the highlights of the 2016 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in St. Louis, as listed in SBC LIFE's spring edition.

The racial reconciliation emphasis will take place during the Tuesday morning session of the June 14-15 annual meeting, as announced by SBC President Ronnie Floyd in the Executive Committee journal. SBC LIFE is online at [www.sbclife.net](http://www.sbclife.net).

Jerry Young, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, and Marshall Blalock, pastor of First Baptist Church in Charleston, S.C., will be among the featured speakers.

Floyd and Young were key participants in two racial reconciliation gatherings in Jackson, Miss., in November and August last year. Floyd, senior pastor of Cross Church in northwest Arkansas, and Young, who leads New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson, subsequently were interviewed together by The New York Times and wrote an op-ed at CNN about racial healing in America.

The theme of the annual meeting will be "Awaken America, Reach the World" drawn from Acts 4:31.

Online registration for messengers and local hotels can be accessed at [www.SBCAnnualMeeting.net](http://www.SBCAnnualMeeting.net). Information for preschool child care and programs for children ages 6-12 and students in grades 7-12 also is available through the website. Information about the annual Crossover evangelism outreach prior to the annual meeting can be accessed at St. Louis Metro Baptist Association



(Courtesy SBC)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Art Toalston is senior editor for Baptist Press, news service of the Southern Baptist Convention.

## RUN THE RACE: MICHIGAN GIRLS' MISSION CAMP 2016

Sue Hodnett - Baptist State Convention of Michigan

**FENTON, MI** – Here's the question for Michigan girls and teen girls, "Are you ready for the best week of your summer?" Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM) State Woman's Missionary Union Director, Sue Hodnett is inviting girls to take a boat ride, visit the miniature golf course, cast a fishing line, swim in Bambi Lake, and learn about the wildlife of northern Michigan. But Hodnett adds, "The real attraction will be worshipping with friends from churches all over our state, working on service mission projects, and meeting with a missionary from Africa."



"Run the Race" is the theme so several of the camp activities will take on a Summer Olympics focus, helping to share a world perspective of missions and spiritual needs around the world.

Through Bible-based activities and fellowship, campers are provided foundational knowledge of Christian principles, as well as, practical ways to share their faith and testimony. Along with activities that encourage physical and mental development, campers are involved in exciting, fun activities and camaraderie; they are also involved in activities that provide practical as well as challenging Christian development. God calls us to fellowship with others, share the Good News of God's grace, and grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. At Girls Mission Camp, campers learn how God invites us to reach out to the world by being Christ's presence to others every day!



## RUN THE RACE: MICHIGAN GIRLS' MISSION CAMP 2016 (continued)

### When is Girls Camp 2016?

July 11-15, 2016. Starting time: Monday- 1:30pm, departing time: Friday - 10:30am. Registration will be available at [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) beginning May 1st.

### Where is Girls Camp 2016 located?

Bambi Lake Baptist Retreat and Conference Center. Send mail to: PO Box 487, Roscommon, MI 48653

### Is the camp fully equipped and comfortable for living?

Yes! Bambi Lake has lodge-style dormitories, a dining hall, and conference center. The recreational facilities are engaging and readily available for camp activities. Sun-screen and insect repellent are recommended supplies for campers to bring with them.

### How do I get to Girls Camp?

Church van, parent's car, with a friend. Please contact us at [wmu@bscm.org](mailto:wmu@bscm.org) if we can help you connect with a church van ride.

### What is the age group allowed to attend?

For girls completing grades 3rd-12th. Are there any prerequisites to attending Girls Mission Camp? Girls Mission Camp is a Christian camp open to all girls (grades 3-12) from any faith or culture.

### What are the necessary forms I need to complete, and where can they be found?

The required forms will be available online at [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org). You must complete each form before the camper can attend: camper registration and a medical form. Registration will be available at [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) beginning May 1st.

### How much does it cost to attend any of Girls Camp 2016?

\$155 per camper. Everything is included while you are there. Transportation to and from the camp are not included and up to the individual camper to provide.

### What should my child bring to camp?

"What to Bring" list is located on the registration form page.

### If I have further questions, how can I contact the Girls Camp Director?

[wmu@bscm.org](mailto:wmu@bscm.org)

### How do I donate to the camp scholarship?

To make a donation to Girls Camp, please send a check to: Girls Camp 2016, BSCM, 8420 Runyan Lake Road, Fenton, MI 48430. Please make checks payable to: BSCM.

### What is the history of Girls Camp?

Many women will remember going to G.A. Camp when they were younger. Girls Camp is the same, a missions-education camp. The camp is called Girls Camp and is open to all girls desiring to experience a Christian camp and to grow in their relationship with friends and Jesus!

### Is there a Boys Camp?

Yes! Boys have their own camp at Bambi Lake and is held August 8-12, 2016, for registration information check the [www.bscm.org/calendar](http://www.bscm.org/calendar) website.

### I have never been to camp, can I bring my Mom?

Yes! You can bring your mom, your grandma, aunt, older sister to Mom and Me Camp! Mom and Me Camp is, July 15-16, 2016 at Bambi Lake Baptist Retreat and Conference Center. The cost is \$50, (\$25 for campers 8 & under). Mom and Me Camp is designed to share the experiences of a full week at mission camp with your mom. It helps mom and daughter(s) to understand what mission camp is, as well as providing an opportunity for quality time together. Registration information can be found at [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) beginning May 1st.

We are looking forward to seeing you at "Run the Race", MI Girl's Mission Camp!



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sue Hodnett is the Women's Ministry & WMU Consultant for the BSCM as well as the Executive Director for WMU of Michigan. She attends Lakepointe Church in Macomb, MI.

## COWBOY BOOTS, COMPLIMENTS AND CHRIST

*Loren Armstrong - New Living Christian Church*

**JACKSON, MI** – My sixteen year old daughter, Brooke, came home incredibly happy one day after school last year. I asked her what had happened that day. She explained that on the bus, a girl had on nice cowgirl boots and that she had complimented her. The girl told her that she liked her cowgirl boots also, and then she asked if she wanted to sit with her. Brooke said that she seemed pretty nice! Over the next few weeks, the two girls bonded over their mutual love of cowgirl boots. Brooke's friendly, kind attitude began to eventually draw her friend to realize that she acted differently than the other kids on the bus.

My daughter's friend asked Brooke what she was doing on the weekends and if she wanted to hang out. Brooke would say, "Well, Sundays I'm at church so you can come and see me there!" My daughter explained to her that she was a Christian and that her Dad also happened to be a pastor at a local church.



Over the next few weeks, the conversation repeated itself. Finally, on the first Sunday in January of 2015 she came to church for the first time. She seemed to enjoy it! For many months, she faithfully attended almost every Sunday. Her parents would drop her off and then leave. Brooke would run out to the parking lot when they arrived just to try to talk to them, and invite them in. Easter Sunday came and our church had been emphasizing for everyone to invite their friends and family. Brooke's friend announced that her parents were going to visit for our Easter Sunday brunch. That Sunday our church people made them feel comfortable, and asked them to come back next week. They agreed to start coming every other Sunday with their daughter, and they did!

Eventually, they began coming every Sunday. They would sit in the second row and Brooke would sit with them. The three of them came to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and were saved together as a family. A simple compliment between two young girls became the bridge to an entire family coming to know Christ. My daughter will tell you, "Always give someone a compliment because you never know, they might become a Christian from it." God can use a simple act of kindness to reach others for Him.

Brooke and Gabriel Larkins  
(Photo courtesy New Living Christian Church)



The Larkin family (Photo courtesy New Living Christian Church)

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Loren Armstrong is a bivocational Pastor at New Living Christian Church in Jackson, Michigan. His career specialties include, marketing and commercial facility management, consulting, large project logistics, building solutions, emergency preparedness and energy management systems. Loren hopes to use these skills to serve in his church, and others throughout the Baptist State Convention of Michigan.



## HMONG CHURCH ANNOUNCES NEW PASTOR

*Nomyee Lor - Hmong-American Baptist Church*



Pastor Nomyee Lor, wife Za and their son, Mosae  
(Photo courtesy Nomyee Lor)

**ROSEVILLE, MI** – The Hmong-American Baptist Church in Roseville is asking the churches of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM) to join together in welcoming and praying for their new pastor, Nomyee Lor. Pastor Nomyee Lor and his family recently arrived in Roseville where he will serve as the pastor. The church is grateful for Lor, his wife, Za and their son, Mosae. There is renewed excitement among the members anticipating a great movement of God in the years to come. Pastor Nomyee and the congregation asks their fellow churches to pray for the Hmong community here in Michigan. There are many who have yet to hear of a personal relationship with the living God.

Pastor Nomyee served as pastor of the Oakland Hmong Baptist Church in Pontiac the past five years. Prior to that, he and Za, served as the Elder &

Education Leader and the Women's Leader with Detroit Hmong Alliance in Warren. His ministry also included time with the Providence Alliance Church in Providence, RI.

Za completed her studies in nursing from Fitchburg State University in Fitchburg, MA and currently works as a nurse at Troy Beaumont Hospital in Troy.

Pastor Nomyee completed his studies in Bible/History from Pillsbury Baptist Bible College in Owatonna, MN. His studies also include education from Fitchburg State University and Wayne State University in Detroit, MI. In addition to his pastorate, Pastor Nomyee currently works as a teacher with Clintondale Community Schools in Clinton Township.

## FLINT WATER CRISIS RESPONSE A 'BIG SUCCESS'

*Staff*

**FLINT, MI** – Some important milestones have been reached as the Southern Baptists Disaster Relief (SBDR) and Michigan Baptist Disaster Relief (MBDR) conclude their response to the Flint Water Crisis. The joint response that began less than three months ago, has distributed more than 22,000 gallons of water, installed water filters in more than 500 homes, and made nearly 5000 ministry contacts.

This response represents a huge shift for Southern Baptist relief according to SBDR Response Coordinator, Eddie Blackmon. Blackmon says, "Traditionally, SBDR would be approached by families asking 'can you come help us?' But in this case, it was the local government, Genesee County, who was asking for the support of disaster relief volunteers."

Volunteers came from states across the Southern Baptist Convention, as well as, many volunteers from Baptist churches across Michigan. They represented 916 volunteer days in just a few short months. Blackmon adds, "Everyday we would hear stories from the volunteers of how they were able to help and to serve the people of Flint, but also how those people being served would pray over our volunteers."

More than 400 Bibles were distributed and there were at least 28 professions of faith. SBDR Project Manager, Bill Johnson said "That's why we're here, to meet people's physical needs, but to meet their spiritual needs. And that's just opening doors for us to tell people that Jesus loves them, people love them, and we're here to help."

The City of Flint's water contamination came to light last year. It has been a problem for three years since the city switched its water supply from Detroit to a new water authority which was getting its water supply from the Flint River. The contaminated water had elevated lead exposure. Children are the most endangered when exposed to lead.



## FULANI HERDSMEN KILL 300 NIGERIAN CHRISTIANS

*Diana Chandler - Baptist Press*

**BENUE, NIGERIA (BP)** – Muslim Fulani herdsmen, believed to be buoyed by Boko Haram insurgents posing as the nomadic cattlemen, continue to occupy farmland in Benue state, Nigeria, two weeks after killing more than 300 Christian farmers there in a longstanding land dispute.

Heavily armed Fulani herdsmen massacred the farmers and displaced thousands of others in an onslaught of attacks that began as early as Feb. 22 and, despite some reports that the assailants have retreated, the herdsmen have remained in Benue as thousands of their cattle eat crops and graze cultivated land, Morning Star News reported March 11.



Christians flee attacks from Islamist militants.  
(Photo Courtesy NAIJA247 News)

According to the Senate of Nigeria, the marauders included Boko Haram insurgents posing as Fulani in a tactical maneuver to intensify attacks against Christians while evading detection, the Lagos news service Information Nigeria reported.

The victims are members of the Agatu tribe, a group of about 154,000 farmers who live on ancestral farmland in Benue. About 81 percent of them are Christian, according to the Joshua Project. About 7,000 displaced Christians and villagers have scattered to refugee camps in five neighboring communities, Morning Star News reported.

Fulani leaders have said the massacre was in retaliation after farmers killed 10,000 of their cows, but eyewitnesses only reported human corpses.

"Such a mass slaughter would take weeks, and the skeletal remains of the cows would completely dot the landscape of Agatu, and the stench would permeate the air," Morning Star News quoted human rights lawyer Emmanuel Ogebe, who visited the affected villages with a fact-finding team. "If they are there on reprisal as they claimed, since they are not [indigenous to] the villages, why have they not left after the attack -- and why have they occupied the villages?"

Ogebe described the assaults as a "jihad of a sort to take over the villages."

Fulani targeted Christians and church buildings in the massacre, but left mosques untouched, Morning Star News said.

Fulani herdsmen have clashed with Christian farmers in northeastern and middle Nigeria for more than 100 years, but the latest attack is perhaps the deadliest recorded of late. Previously, the slaughter of at least 200 farmers in May, 2014 in Galadima village, just 10 miles southwest of the capital city of Abuja, had been listed as Fulani's deadliest attack to date, included in the 2015 Global Terrorism Index (GTI) as the 10th deadliest terrorist incident of 2014.

Fulani militants are accused of killing 1,229 people in 2014, up from just 63 the previous year, and are a growing threat to the stability of particularly Nigeria's Middle Belt where most of the deaths occur, the GTI reported. Most of the attacks are confined to just six of the Nigeria's 36 states, including Benue, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Plateau and Taraba in the Middle Belt.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, himself a Fulani, said in January that he planned to recommend a portion of land be set aside for Fulani to graze their livestock, but no progress has been noted. The Fulani tribe numbers about 20 million people, 70 percent of them nomadic, spread across at least seven West African countries.

Buhari claimed a technical defeat of Boko Haram at the end of 2015, but the ISIS-aligned militants have continued to use suicide bombers, grenades and guns to attack villages. Boko Haram has killed an estimated 17,000-20,000 in the past six years, including Christians and moderate Muslims.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Diana Chandler is a staff writer for Baptist Press, the news service of the Southern Baptist Convention. Chandler had been a freelance writer for the Baptist Press since 2008. Her work has included coverage of hurricane-related flooding in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. She also contributed to a series of stories on Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program in 2009. A native of Laurel, Miss., Chandler holds a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and an undergraduate degree in journalism from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.



## KIDS NEED 'SAFE PLACE' AMID DIGITAL-AGE PORN

Grace Thornton - The Alabama Baptist



Traylor and wife, Melody, with their 3 children  
(Photo courtesy [UndoneRedone.com](http://UndoneRedone.com))

**BIRMINGHAM, AL (BP)** – Traylor Lovvorn saw porn for the first time when he was 8. It set him on a path that ripped his family apart for years before God healed him and put them back together. It breaks his heart. It sobers him. And it makes him wonder what's about to happen in the next few years.

"Today's 8- to 12-year-olds, when they are first exposed to porn it is not a Playboy or Penthouse centerfold -- it is much more graphic and hardcore," Lovvorn said. Those early childhood viewers of hardcore pornography are now entering their 20s -- and "the church is not ready," he said, describing the implications as massive and the numbers staggering. These days 9 of 10 boys and 6 of 10 girls are exposed to hardcore porn before age 18, he said. It's in response to this epidemic that Lovvorn and his wife Melody started Undone Redone, a ministry to help protect and heal families from the devastating effects of pornography and sexual addiction and sin.

The Lovvorns, of Birmingham, Ala., led a seminar on "My Secure Family: Equipping Parents to Protect Children in the Digital Age" at Samford University in partnership with its Ministry Training Institute and The Alabama Baptist newsjournal to open the conversation. "As a parent, we have got to be the safe place where our children feel safe to come and ask their questions and to be curious" for when -- not if -- they are exposed to porn, Traylor Lovvorn said. "Otherwise our children are left to traverse the landscape by themselves. I know we're busy and sometimes it's easier to let the phone or device be the babysitter, but we've got to be engaged with this."

Melea Stephens, a licensed professional counselor from Birmingham who also spoke during the Jan. 23 seminar, said it's important for parents to give their children a way to categorize porn so they know how to respond when they are exposed to it. "For example, I know of one little girl who was first exposed to porn at a neighbor's house when she was 6. Because she didn't have a way to categorize it, she started acting out what she saw. She started acting things out on her siblings," Stephens said. Porn warps children's sense of safety and their development because they don't have a compartment for it, she said. "To give them a way to compartmentalize porn is a first way to help them deal with it."

Traylor Lovvorn said trying to insulate children from the world is like having a pool and -- instead of teaching them to swim -- building a fence around it and pretending it's not there. "We are pretending the world isn't broken, and we're trying to keep them from seeing that it is," Lovvorn said. "Life is messy. It's broken. We have to have the conversations. I'm not talking about 'the talk.' I'm talking about an ongoing conversation that lasts. Think about the onslaught of information they are inundated with. We are foolish to think that one conversation is adequate."

Some parents respond to threats like porn with fear-based reactions such as denial, Lovvorn said. But denial sends the message that you don't care whether your child is facing the world's brokenness alone, he said. But the other end of the spectrum -- hyper-vigilance -- communicates to your child that he or she isn't trustworthy, Lovvorn said. "We need to set boundaries but we need to talk about the 'why,'" he said. "We need to have a grace-based response rather than a fear-based reaction." And that grace-based response provides the compartment that Stephens said is so important.

One resource for talking with children is a book called "Good Pictures, Bad Pictures," which is meant to "porn proof" young children, she said. "Instead of eliciting curiosity, it helps defuse some of that by teaching them that there are bad pictures out there and why they can be bad for them," Stephens said. "It is not some major secret ... so when it comes up they are more like, 'Oh, I know what that is,' and know how to deal with it." It helps them know how to take their thinking brain and make it the boss of their feeling brain, Stephens said.

Traylor Lovvorn illustrated this idea with the story of some young children who decided for themselves to change the channel when something inappropriate came on even when no authority figure was around to tell them they shouldn't watch it. "It was a beautiful



Parenting Seminar "My Secure Family: Equipping parents to protect their children in this digital age." (Photo courtesy Alabama Baptist Convention)

## KIDS NEED 'SAFE PLACE' AMID DIGITAL-AGE PORN (continued)

picture of how they can learn that it's not just a rule, it's the heart behind the rule," he said. "It's about shepherding their hearts and training them early so that they can understand and think for themselves." Starting the conversation early, Melody Lovvorn noted, also helps set up a safe place for children to return to talk as they grow up and face more real threats.

"If we have those conversations, they know 'Mom and Dad are preparing me and I've got this safe place to go back to,'" she said. "One of the things I told my boys was, 'In middle school, if you get a picture from a girl and it's naked photos, this is how we want to handle it,' and then I gave them a plan." As parents, the Lovvorns want to "create safe fences" but also teach their children to "think and be aware of the Holy Spirit telling you when something is not right."

Teaching them to think is the most important thing, Traylor Lovvorn said. But he also offered some practical helps to be that "safe fence" as children grow up. One of them is Circle, a device that helps parents monitor and filter devices and even set bedtimes in the house to cut off Internet access via phones and laptops. Another is an app found at [teensafe.com](http://teensafe.com) that allows parents to view their child's texts, see the location of their child's phone and see what apps he or she has installed on the phone. "Kids say things like, 'You have no right to do this,' but we do," Stephens said. "You are their parents and it's your responsibility to help them navigate the world." For more information visit <http://www.undoneredone.com/>

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Grace Thornton is a correspondent for The Alabama Baptist ([www.thealabamabaptist.org](http://www.thealabamabaptist.org)), newsjournal of the Alabama Baptist Convention.

## AROUND THE STATE: CHURCH EVENTS & STAFF CHANGES

### Evangelism Training

Genesee Baptist Association office on May 17, 2016 at 9:30am. Speaker: Joel Southerland. Register at [www.bscm.org/register](http://www.bscm.org/register).

### Secret Church: Know His Word. Know His Persecuted.

A global Gospel in a world of religions. April 29, 2016 from 6:30pm to 12:30am at Eastgate Baptist Church. Register by April 4, 2016. Cost \$10 for study guides. For more information go to [www.radical.net/secret-church](http://www.radical.net/secret-church) and to register call (810) 742-5410 or email [office@eastgatebaptist.org](mailto:office@eastgatebaptist.org).

### Journey from Scars to Beauty

Warren Woods Baptist Church. April 15-16, 2016. Speakers: Julie Ziglar, Cassandra Perkins and Toni Cooper. Purchase tickets at [www.ScarstoBeauty.com](http://www.ScarstoBeauty.com).

### Prayer and Fasting Workshop

The Prayer and Fasting Workshop will take place Monday, April 25 from 6:00 to 8:00pm at the GDBA Training and Development Center. For more information, contact the Greater Detroit Baptist Association at (313) 533-2663.

### Free Tickets

Free family and group tickets to visit the Henry Ford Museum and the Greenfield Village are available at the GDBA office. For more information, contact the Greater Detroit Baptist Association at (313) 533-2663.



## WE NEED MORE CHURCH NUTS

*Tim Patterson - Executive Director/Treasurer*

A guy stands in a bar sipping a drink and minding his own business. It had been a rough day and he was trying to unwind and forget about all the stress he has been under for the past months. The criticism he has taken at his job and from his supposed friends has really taken a toll on his emotional and mental health. All of the sudden, he begins hearing a voice saying nice things about him. Things like, "Do you know you are one of the smartest persons I have ever met? Gosh, you are good looking. I really like that suit. Where did you get it?"

He looks all around and sees no one within speaking distance. In fact the only other person in the bar is the bartender. Now he begins to question his own sanity and thinks that maybe all this pressure has finally done some serious damage to his psyche. He takes another sip of his drink and tries to ignore the voice, but to no avail. The voice continues to say nice things to him. "You are the best employee your company has. I have never met a nicer man than you. You are a great husband and dad."

He finally gets up enough nerve to say something to the bartender. "Hey barkeep. I think there is something seriously wrong with me. I keep hearing this voice saying nice things about me." The bartender very casually and nonchalantly says, "There's nothing wrong with you. It's our peanuts," the guy exclaims, "Your peanuts? I don't understand." The bartender says, "Yes, our peanuts. You see, at our bar, peanuts are COMPLIMENTARY."

I don't know about you, but now and then I could use a case of those peanuts. It seems as though many in our society have taken the position that if someone does something they don't agree with or like, it is their God-given right and responsibility to complain about it or "bless" that person out. In our churches some believe that they have the spiritual gift of griping. Of course, if that same individual notices another person doing something good they keep silent so as not to create any undue pride or bring attention to a job well done.



We need compliments and encouragement. They are, many times, the very fuel that drives the engines of our heart and soul. Without them it is likely that we will find ourselves running on empty or stranded on the road of life. A kind word or a compliment will keep us going when nothing else will. Mark Twain said that he could live six weeks on one compliment. I agree. It doesn't take much to encourage someone or to give a compliment. In fact, it takes no more energy or effort than it does to criticize. In our churches, here in Michigan and across our nation, it is not much different than in society. Our churches are filled with assorted nuts. I just wish that they were more like bars in this one instance, in that our nuts were complementary.

### Check out what the Word says:

**Proverbs 15:23 - "A man has joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!"**

**Proverbs 25:11 - "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."**

**Proverbs 12:25 - "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad."**

(For those of you who want to criticize my use of a joke about a bar, I would feel a lot better with a word of encouragement.☺)



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tim Patterson is Executive Director/Treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Elected unanimously in May of 2015, Patterson formerly served for 9 years as pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla. He also served as trustee chair and national mobilizer for the North American Mission Board.

## SMILE & CELEBRATION

*Tony Lynn - State Director of Missions*

A smile spread over my face when I heard President Kevin Ezell explain that, last year, Michigan Southern Baptists gave 24% more than the previous year to the North American Missions Offering, often called the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. The increase was the third highest in the nation. Congratulations.

My celebration gave way to planning as I listened to Ezell further explain that if Michigan Southern Baptists will give more during 2016 to the North American Missions Offering than the average amount given during the last three years that 100% of that extra contribution would return back to Michigan, in 2017, for church planting causes!

### Extra Giving in 2016 = Extra Church Planting Resources in 2017

Wow! What a challenge. What a reward.



Young married couples: Tony and Jamie Lynn with Mike and Shar Durbin circa 1978 (Photo courtesy Tony Lynn)

### Stingy to Sharing

In 1977, Jamie and I arrived in Bolivar, Missouri so I could start my education to become a pastor. I was a three-year-old follower of Christ. Jamie sewed at a pants factory. I cut grass on a sprawling campus. Our money was tight. Eating salad, pizza, and ice cream at the local JD's Pizzeria buffet for \$1.69 a piece was a rare treat. Our bill was often times paid with coins rather than dollars.

When we joined First Baptist Bolivar with 800 people in the sanctuary I felt even poorer. Car dealers, doctors, professors, and attorneys surrounded us as we worshiped. When the offering plate was circulated, I would clench a coin or at most a dollar bill in my fist and then stealthily bury my chickenfeed in the mound of offering envelopes. I gave God less than I spent for one meal at JD's. "Whew! Glad that's over," I thought every Sunday.

During repeated Sunday lunches my new wife, a deacon's daughter, would ask me, "When are we going to start tithing?" I saw my stingy ways were grieving her. At first, she had to explain tithing to me. My parents had practiced it, but we never discussed it. After Jamie explained, I finally understood that tithing is 10% of our total earnings before deductions (Genesis 14:19-20 & Malachi 3:8-12).

I countered her gentle question with self-centered responses. We're poor. We're paying for college. Our 10% is nothing compared to what others give. Our giving isn't going to change anything in that church. But within a month, my heart changed from stingy to generous. How?

At the church, we were faithful in our attendance. We arrived on time at every service. We ate at every potluck. We attended prayer meetings and Bible studies. We engaged in every manner except for our giving because I was tightfisted.

While I secretly held back our 10%, here is how the members of First Baptist Bolivar treated us; they greeted us by name and invited us to sit with them, they invited Jamie to sing in the choir, they invited us into their homes for meals and fun, Professors told us to call them by their first names. They invited us to share in their lives all the while I was stealing from God.

The Holy Spirit convicted me of my selfishness in light of their generosity. God's Word and my experience made it clear, I was being stingy while these people were sharing with us. They poured their lives into us. For the first time in my life, I understood the power of the collaboration of Christians.

After those first months of our marriage, we started giving out 10%. Since then, Jamie and I found ways to increase our gifts throughout the years through controlled spending, constant savings, and correctly sharing.

### Caring & Giving

In Mark 12:41-44, the Bible tells us that 2 coins given by a poor woman impressed Jesus because she gave out of her poverty. Her gift was greater than those who gave greater amounts. How so? The priorities of God were on her heart.

As 2016 continues, I hope you will learn the joy of giving. Can I suggest, set a percentage, set an amount, and give consistently through your church. The collaboration will give you cause to celebrate like it did for me in 1977 back in Bolivar, Missouri.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tony Lynn is the State Director of Missions for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Before coming on staff at the BSCM, Tony served as lead pastor for more than six years at Crosspoint Church in Monroe, Michigan. He and his wife, Jamie, also served with the International Mission Board in Africa and in Europe.



## INTENTIONAL EVANGELISM WORKS

*Mike Durbin - State Director of Evangelism*

God blessed Shar and me with the friendship of a young woman named Eliene when we served as missionaries in Brazil. She was a seminary student in a class I taught. Every student needed a mentor and to be connected to a place of service in a local church. Eliene asked us to serve as her mentors and to let her help at the church we were planting. She thought we were helping her, but she was really a Godsend to us. God used her in many ways, especially working with teens. She was engaged to a wonderful follower of Christ named Adilson. He was a gifted musician and we quickly enlisted him as our worship leader.

While we were in Michigan on furlough, Adilson and Eliene got married and moved to a brand new neighborhood with hundreds and hundreds of new homes and thousands of people. There wasn't a church of any kind in this new neighborhood. Upon our return to Brazil, they asked us to help them plant a church in their neighborhood. They offered their home (actually it was their front lawn) to get started.

It was the dry season so we didn't have to worry about rain for a few months. Adilson rigged up a string of 100 watt construction lights and placed them overhead so we could see during the service at night. We bought bricks and set wood planks on top of them so people would have a place to sit. We praised God in the open air and preached the Gospel. People came and a core group developed.

We purchased land (with a really small house) on the main street between where they lived and another housing development that was being built. It was time to launch the church. We went door to door and invited the community to attend an outdoor showing of the Jesus film in our new location. Shar sewed sheets together to make a massive screen. It turned out to be a great idea because people could see the movie on both sides of the sheets. Every bus that entered the neighborhood had to pass in front of the screen coming and going. A large crowd gathered on the site and many watched from their homes.



Adilson lead our worship team.  
(Photo courtesy Mike Durbin)

A man and his daughter got off the bus. When the little girl saw the film, she asked her daddy if they could watch. Her father, Montanha, was a Buddhist. He told her that they couldn't stay, but he brought his family to a later showing of the film. After the movie, I offered to lead a Bible study in the Gospel of John for anyone who was interested. I would give them the Bible we studied. Montanha always wanted a Bible. He told me that he didn't want anything to do with my faith, but he wanted me to teach him the Bible. For weeks, I went to his home and we studied the Bible. Eventually, he started coming to our worship services. Eventually, Montanha gave his life to Christ and I had the joy of baptizing him. He connected with Adilson and became a part of our praise team and a great witness for the Lord.

It was a big evangelistic event that attracted Montanha. The big screen, the powerful movie about Jesus, and the large crowd of people got his attention. It gave us the opportunity to meet him and develop a relationship with him that allowed us to speak the Word of God into his life.

Here in Michigan we are entering a season when many of our churches will conduct large evangelistic events. Such events are incredible opportunities to meet people who need Jesus and share the Gospel with them. **The BSCM wants to partner with you to reach your community and one way we can help is through Evangelism Grants.** These grants are available to help churches to cover the cost of hosting an evangelism event. To apply for a grant, go to [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) and download the Evangelism Grant Form. We are looking to help churches with evangelism strategies that include prayer, witness training, and follow up plans. You can also contact me directly if you have questions or want to discuss your ideas.

Montanha finds faith after seeing Jesus film with his daughter.  
(Photo courtesy Mike Durbin)



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Durbin is the State Evangelism Director for the Baptist State Convention of Michigan. Before joining the state convention staff, Mike served as Church Planting Catalyst and Director of Missions in Metro Detroit since 2007. He also has served as a pastor and bi-vocational pastor in Michigan, as well as International Missionary to Brazil.



## CLASSIFIEDS

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### Part-time Youth Pastor Needed

Bethlehem Baptist Church, located at 960 E. Huron River Drive, Belleville, MI 48111 is searching and hiring for the position of Part-Time Youth Pastor (20 hours/week). The Youth Pastor will be ministering to our Youth – ages 13 to Young Adults. If interested, you may send your resume to: [actanap@yahoo.com](mailto:actanap@yahoo.com). To schedule an interview, please call Pastor Aaron Tanap, Church: (734) 697-0566 or Cell: (734) 658-5097.

### Need Chairs, Tables

We received the confirmation from the seller that our church will be able to purchase our first building. If anyone knows of any chairs or tables, we are in need. We currently meet at Harper Woods High School in Harper Woods, MI, but I am willing to drive if you can help with our need. Please contact Mathew Vroman, Eastside Community Church, at [mathewvroman@gmail.com](mailto:mathewvroman@gmail.com) and [pastor@eastsidecommunitychurch.com](mailto:pastor@eastsidecommunitychurch.com) or call (313) 657-1100.

### Bivocational Pastor

Highland Community Church in Highland, MI is seeking a Bivocational Senior Pastor. We are seeking a man called by God to be our Pastor. He must have a heart for The Lord, His Word, and His people. Please visit our website for more information about our church family, service, beliefs, and values. To see a full job description and to apply please visit [www.hcclife.org/pastoral-applicants/](http://www.hcclife.org/pastoral-applicants/) or send your resume and cover letter to: Highland Community Church, Attn: Pastor Search Team, 2350 Harvey Lake Rd., Highland, MI 48356. If you have further questions you can call (248) 887-4556 or email us at [resumes@hcclife.org](mailto:resumes@hcclife.org).

### Lead Pastor needed

CrossPointe Church in Monroe, MI is seeking a Lead Pastor. We are a medium-sized, rural, contemporary church with traditional values. We are looking for a visionary person, a strategic thinker, and effective leader. This person must be a team-player who will work collaboratively with our CrossPointe Staff, our Deacons, and our Ministry Leadership Teams. For more information [click here](#) or email [pastorsearchteam.crosspointe@gmail.com](mailto:pastorsearchteam.crosspointe@gmail.com).

### Operation First Step

Churches of the Greater Detroit Baptist Association's "*Operation First Step*" have been hard at work in developing and implementing an "Urban Strategy," to strengthen and mobilize our congregations in evangelizing and revitalizing communities. With the warmer months approaching, we are preparing to get started again, and are in need of supplies. If you and/or your Church are interested and can help, please contact us (313) 533-2663. If you have supplies and want to drop them off at the Association Office Building the address is 24250 Joy Road, Redford, MI.

#### Items Needed:

- Hammers
- Nail guns and Nails
- Power and Hand Saws
- Extension Ladders
- Extension Cords
- Generator (New or Used)
- Lawn Mowers and Snow Blowers
- Tools (crowbars, drills and drills bits, screwdriver sets)

### Theological library items needed

Trenton Missionary Baptist Church, Trenton is collecting Bibles, lexicons, concordances, Bible dictionaries, commentaries, and training material for Cordilleras Ministerial Academy. Located in the Philippines, this ministerial school is for rural pastors who have little or no theological training. To donate items, contact Pastor George Wood at [joannew2600@yahoo.com](mailto:joannew2600@yahoo.com).



## CLASSIFIEDS (continued)

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### Church Information Packets

The information previously mailed out in the Church Information Packets will now be available online at [www.bscm.org](http://www.bscm.org) for all churches to download, print, and use!

### Classified Ad Submission Guidelines

1. Baptist Beacon classifieds are posted free of charge.
2. All classified posts will run for 2 consecutive months. Longer or shorter times may be requested. Publication of classifieds correspond with the monthly publication of the Baptist Beacon.
3. Classifieds must be from a BSCM church.
4. Be sure to include thorough details of request, name of church, contact information as well as a point of contact.
5. Submissions must be made no later than the 10th of the month prior to publication.
6. Submit all classified ads to [beacon@bscm.org](mailto:beacon@bscm.org)

## ABOUT US

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The Baptist Beacon is the official newsjournal of the [Baptist State Convention of Michigan \(BSCM\)](#), in association with the Southern Baptist Convention. The mission of the Baptist Beacon is to communicate with Michigan Baptists in our shared mission of punching holes in the darkness through starting, strengthening, and sending churches.

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