

Rapid change likely ahead for Baptist associations

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Rapid change likely ahead for Baptist associations

By George Henson

Staff Writer

Associations have led a rollercoaster existence throughout their history, and their future should to prove just as exciting, according to Paul Stripling, executive director emeritus of [Waco Regional Baptist Network](#) and author of [Turning Points in the History of Baptist Associations in America](#).

Stripling wrote the book at the invitation of the Southern Baptist Associational Directors of Missions task force for the commemoration of the 300th anniversary next year of Baptist associations.

Paul Stripling

Christian teens likely to become apathetic 20-somethings

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Christian teens likely to become apathetic 20-somethings

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—Six out of 10 teens involved in a church probably will not continue their spiritual commitment into early adulthood, according to research by the [Barna Group](#).

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[Terrify No More](#) by Gary A. Haugen with Gregg Hunter (W Publishing Group)

According to *National Geographic*, about 27 million slaves live in our modern-day world. These slaves range from girls as young as 5 years old, forced to sell their bodies in the sex-trafficking underworld, to whole families bound to toil away their lives making bricks or cigarettes in South Asia and other regions.

The four-fold purpose of [International Justice Mission](#) and its teams of investigators, undercover operatives and attorneys is to venture into the shady corners of the globe to rescue people helpless and oppressed by bondage, to bring the perpetrators of abuse to justice, to minister to the victims through compassionate aftercare and to change communities so the injustices no longer are acceptable.


What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com .

Join Gary Haugen, International Justice Mission's president and founder, as he takes readers through both heart-breaking and exciting real-life journeys into the darkness of evil to radiate the light of God's truth and grace by "defending the fatherless and the oppressed in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more" (Psalm 10:18).

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Arkansas paper could lose independence. Arkansas Baptist leaders will try to turn control of the [Arkansas Baptist News](#) over to the state convention staff, replacing the independent board that currently governs the newspaper. A task force, appointed last year by the president of the [Arkansas Baptist State Convention](#), will make recommendations to the annual convention meeting—including one asking the president of the Arkansas Executive Board and the president of the newspaper board to appoint a committee to discuss the possibility of merging the paper with another publication under the jurisdiction of the state convention's Executive Board. The constitution and bylaws of the Arkansas convention require the *Arkansas Baptist News* be governed by a 15-member board of directors. Any recommendation to merge the newspaper into the Executive Board would necessitate a constitutional amendment, which would require approval by a two-thirds majority of messengers at two consecutive state convention meetings. That likely would take until November 2008 to accomplish.

Missouri Baptist executive director survives ouster effort. David Clippard remains executive director of the [Missouri Baptist Convention](#), despite an apparent effort to oust him Sept. 22. Following a marathon, closed-door meeting at the convention building in Jefferson City, Executive Board members attempted to quell infighting between the convention's factions by affirming Clippard and his apparent protagonist, fundamentalist

leader Roger Moran. In a press release issued three days after the meeting, Executive Board members confirmed they investigated concerns that had been brought to the board and affirmed Clippard, Moran, the work of the nominating committee Moran chairs, and the convention's other committees.

President urges SBC to be relevant, seek revival. Southern Baptist Convention President [Frank Page](#) warned the [SBC Executive Committee](#) their denomination must retain its relevancy in a rapidly changing world. "In the eyes of many ... we have become an archaic, burdensome bureaucracy that has no relevancy for today or the days to come," he said. Page called for "a Holy Ghost revival" in the denomination. One obstacle to such revival, he said, is the divisions that exist in the SBC.

Ten percent of Southern Baptist pastors thoroughly Calvinist. One Southern Baptist pastor in 10 considers himself a five-point Calvinist, a survey by LifeWay Research revealed. LifeWay surveyed 413 pastors and discovered 10 percent identify themselves as subscribing to total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints, while 85 percent said they do not consider themselves [five-point Calvinists](#), 4 percent don't know and 1 percent refused to answer. The research revealed no significant statistical difference in the responses of pastors who are over age 40 and those who are under 40.

Trustee wants tongues addressed in BF&M. A seminary trustee, whose recent chapel sermon was barred from the school's website because of his comments about speaking in tongues, has asked that the Southern Baptist Convention address the issue in its official confession of faith. [Dwight McKissic](#), pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington and a trustee at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, sent a letter to SBC President Frank Page and members of the SBC Executive Committee asking them to "initiate a process of addressing and formally adopting a

position sanctioned by the SBC in 2007 or 2008 annual meeting, to be included in the Baptist Faith & Message, regarding our position(s) on spiritual gifts, private prayer language and speaking in tongues.”

CBF receives missional church grant. The Waco-based Christ Is Our Salvation foundation has given the [Cooperative Baptist Fellowship](#) a \$1.5 million grant to transform CBF churches into missional congregations—churches where missions permeates every aspect of congregational life. The grant will be spent over the next three years. Half of the funds will go to congregations who complete the eight-week CBF program “It’s Time: A Journey Toward Missional Faithfulness” and meet other requirements. CBF expects to use the grant money to help churches conduct censuses, which will provide data for identifying and developing specific focus areas in congregations. The grant also will provide for four annual retreats focused on developing congregational ministers among laity. CBF leaders also will work with Baylor University’s [Center for Family and Community Ministries](#) to strengthen family life in the church context. The Fellowship also will work with the center to create church-based internships for undergraduate and graduate students.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.

2nd Opinion: Associations to celebrate milestone

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2nd Opinion:

Associations to celebrate milestone

By Stephen Parks & Lynn Parks

Next year marks the 300th anniversary of the first [Baptist association](#) in America, [Philadelphia Baptist Association](#), formed in 1707. Baptists created associations to establish doctrinal parameters and fellowship with like-minded believers. Associations provided advice on Baptist practices, helped churches find credentialed ministers and safeguarded doctrinal and ethical integrity. They enabled churches to cooperate geographically in mission, educational and benevolence ventures. For example, Philadelphia Association started Brown University. Philadelphia Association has been the prototype for Southern Baptist associations and conventions since 1707.

By the late 1700s, associations focused on mission work, and new churches sprung up all along the Atlantic seaboard and even west of the Alleghenies. In 1792, in England, [William Carey](#) proposed his association send Baptist missionaries to “heathen” populations, and the modern missionary movement was born.

Eventually, Baptists realized they needed larger networks to support expanding mission and benevolence projects. One avenue, missionary societies, received support primarily from individuals. The other avenue was larger associations of churches. So, three associations in South Carolina sent delegates to form the first state convention in 1821. In 1845, the [Southern Baptist Convention](#) was formed. Since that time, Southern Baptists have followed the model of cooperation established by associations rather than a societal model.

Counseling center a boon to Bluebonnet pastors, churches

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Counseling center a boon to Bluebonnet pastors, churches

By George Henson

Staff Writer

NEW BRAUNFELS—Director of Missions J.K. Minton believes pastors shouldn't be counselors. And unlike most places, pastors in [Bluebonnet Baptist Association](#) no longer have to serve in a role for which many feel neither prepared nor called.

"For many years, I have believed and preached that pastors had no business in the counseling business," he said. "We are not qualified, and that is not our calling. Such pastoral counseling is ineffective and fraught with peril, since the great majority of counselees are women. Enough pastors have slipped into immorality by forming emotional relationships with women during pastoral counseling."

Judy
Walter
directs the
Oakwood
Counseling
Center in
New
Braunfels,
handling
referrals
from
Bluebonnet
Baptist
Association
churches.
(Photo by
George
Henson)

DOWN HOME: Language faintly resembles English

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DOWN HOME: Language faintly resembles English

The people who made our garage-door opener probably are very smart. And, after five years and almost 115,000 miles of testing their product, I'd say the people who built my car are keenly intelligent.

Unfortunately, English is a language with which they are only vaguely familiar.

This revelation came to me the other night, as I sat in my car, diligently decoding the owner's manual, then climbing up a ladder to decipher the instructions written on the side of the garage-door opener.

My problem started shortly after Joanna and I bought our new (to us) home and realized we had only one remote control for the door opener. Fortunately—or so I thought—my car has three buttons on the driver's sun visor that can be “trained” to tell a garage door to open.

EDITORIAL: Take steps to reduce terrorist threat

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EDITORIAL:

Take steps to reduce terrorist threat

Did you ever think we would look back at the [Cold War](#) as something akin to the good ol' days?

As a young seminary student, I participated in a peacemaking group. In addition to efforts to ease racial tensions in our community, our primary focus was the nuclear-freeze movement. We wanted to stop [proliferation of nuclear warheads](#) by the United States and the Soviet Union. The sobering realization that both countries could annihilate the human race many times over motivated us to write letters to Congress, speak up for arms reduction, and urge Christians and other citizens to join our cause and advocate for peace. As a first-time father, I felt frightened to bring a child into a world where simple miscommunication, to say nothing of malice and aggression, could usher "[nuclear winter](#)" across the planet.



A generation later, the Soviet Union has fallen. My children are grown. The "peace movement" is quieter. And, although many of those warheads still exist, most Americans and Russians don't think much about the Kremlin-to-the-White-House nuclear hotline.

Frankly, I miss the Cold War. I don't want to go back. But I'd trade today's terrorism tinderbox for yesterday's superpower standoff—in the time it takes a suicide bomber to blow himself and his victims to Kingdom Come.

Texas Baptist schools recognized in national rankings

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Texas Baptist schools recognized in national rankings

U.S. News & World Report [recognized eight universities](#) affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas in its annual ranking of colleges across the country.

[Baylor University](#), [Dallas Baptist University](#), [East Texas Baptist University](#), [Hardin-Simmons University](#), [Houston Baptist University](#), [Howard Payne University](#), the [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#) and [Wayland Baptist University](#) recently were recognized by the publication.

East Texas
Baptist
University
English
Professor
Annemarie
Whaley
helps a
student with
a writing
assignment
in the
English
writing lab
at ETBU's
Scarborough
Hall.

ETBU was ranked 11th in the category "Best Comprehensive Colleges-Bachelor's" category in the western portion of the nation. It also was named second-best "Great School, Great Prices" in that category.

Board examines total expected BGCT 2007 expenditures

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Board examines total expected BGCT 2007 expenditures

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

DALLAS—The [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) Executive Board not only recommended a \$50.6 million 2007 [budget proposal](#), but also looked at total anticipated expenditures from all sources during a Sept. 25-26 meeting in Dallas.

For the first time, the Executive Board examined all expected expenditures for the coming year, including allocated funds from investments and interest income from designated wills and trusts—a responsibility performed by the Administrative Committee prior to changes in the convention's governance.

Veteran missions leader Fenner to be nominated for VP

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Veteran missions leader Fenner to be nominated for VP

By Marv Knox

Editor

DALLAS—Veteran missions leader Joy Fenner will be nominated for first vice president of the [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) when the BGCT holds its annual meeting in Dallas Nov. 13-14.

Fenner, a former missionary to Japan who later served 20 years as executive director-treasurer of [Woman's Missionary Union of Texas](#), will be nominated by [Ed Hogan](#), pastor of [Jersey Village Baptist Church in Houston](#).

Joy Fenner

Gardner Taylor still preaching with power at age 88

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Gardner Taylor still preaching with power at age 88

By Kim Lawton

Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly

RALEIGH, N.C. (RNS)—He's 88 years old and technically retired. But Gardner Taylor still shows the preaching skills that place him on virtually every list of America's greatest contemporary preachers.