

BAPTIST BRIEFS: Fatalities when car hits MercyMe bus.

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Fatalities when car hits MercyMe bus. Two teenagers and an unborn baby were killed Aug. 8 when a car collided with a tour bus carrying the Christian band MercyMe at an intersection in Fort Wayne, Ind., and a third young adult died later. MercyMe had wrapped up a concert in Fort Wayne, and around 1:15 a.m. their bus was traveling through a green light when a car in an oncoming lane attempted a left turn in front of the bus. The driver, 18-year-old Kara Klinker, was nine months pregnant at the time, and her child was pronounced stillborn at a local hospital. The mother died several days after the accident. Two of the car's passengers, Dario Boutte, 19, and Barbara Schmucker, 17, died of blunt-force trauma. The band and crew received minor cuts and bruises.

New Hope honored as Publisher of the Year. New Hope Publishers, the general trade publishing imprint for national Woman's Missionary Union, was recognized as Publisher of the Year by the Advanced Writers and Speakers Association at its Golden Scrolls Banquet held on the eve of the International Christian Retail Show. This is the first time the Birmingham-based publisher received the honor. New Hope had been nominated for the award in years past and was a finalist last year.

Hawkins diagnosed with cancer. O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, has been diagnosed with prostate cancer. In a statement released to leaders of SBC entities, Hawkins, 62, announced doctors had been monitoring his PSA count for months, and results from an Aug. 5 biopsy revealed the diagnosis. Surgery will be scheduled sometime after Sept. 7. "The prognosis is good, and hopefully we have found it early enough. We have reason to be

encouraged at this point at this time,” Hawkins said. Hawkins became president in 1997 of GuideStone Financial Resources, the SBC entity that provides retirement, insurance and investment management products and services to churches, ministries, hospitals, educational and other institutions. Hawkins previously was pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas four years and First Baptist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., 15 years.

Wilson to lead congregational health center. Bill Wilson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Dalton, Ga., will become the chief executive of the North Carolina-based Center for Congregational Health, a nondenominational ministry that provides consultants and trained leaders to help churches become “healthier communities of faith.” He assumes the post Sept. 21 after 33 years of local-church staff ministry in Georgia, Virginia and South Carolina. The center has been without permanent leadership since July 2007, when founder David Odom left to take the helm of the leadership-education program at Duke University Divinity School. Wilson has served as president of the Baptist General Association of Virginia and on the governing boards of a variety of Baptist organizations, including Associated Baptist Press, the Religious Herald, the University of Richmond, the Baptist Center for Ethics, the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, Mercer University and Mercer’s McAfee School of Theology.